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LIFE

OF THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

VOL. III.

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HISTORY OF THE LIFE

OF

ARTHUR

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

FROM THE FRENCH OF M. BRIALMONT

CAPTAIN ON THE STAFF OF THE BELGIAN ARMY.

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WITH EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS

BY THE

REV. G. R. GLEIG, M.A.

CHAPLAIN-GENERAL TO THE FORCES AND PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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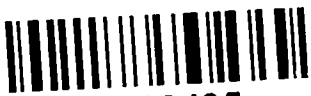
LONDON
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS
1860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PREFACE

TO

THE THIRD AND FOURTH VOLUMES.

THE copiousness and great value of the materials placed at my disposal, have rendered it impossible for me to compress the narrative of the latter portion of the Duke of Wellington's life into one volume.

I do not think that the reader will complain of this, because, important as the Duke's military services to his country are admitted to have been, the part which he played in the civil administration of its affairs was to the full as momentous.

If all that can be told respecting this be not set down here, much of which the world has heretofore been in ignorance is stated. And for the rest, society must be content to wait till the generation of public men now living shall have passed away.

On one head, at all events, I am able to express myself confidently. The reader will find in the following pages no statement which is not true. Thanks

to his Grace the present Duke of Wellington, to whom I cannot sufficiently express my obligations, the whole of his illustrious father's papers have been open to me; and hence, though I have, for obvious reasons, abstained from quoting the *ipsissima verba* of his Grace and of his correspondents, the verity of my narrative has in every case been well fenced in and guarded. Moreover, I have considered it due to the great Duke himself, while giving the substance of his letters, to adopt, as far as possible, his peculiar phraseology. For a man's style in writing is as much a part of himself as the tone of his voice in speaking, or the expression of his countenance.

I have likewise to express my obligations to Lord John Russell for permitting me to read, at the State Paper Office, the Duke's dispatches from the various foreign congresses in which his Grace took part. This is not the first time that his Lordship has made me his debtor, and I trust that he will find as little reason to repent of his kindness now, as I am willing to believe that he found on a former occasion.

It will be seen, that in describing the Duke's manner of life, as a statesman and a private member of society, I have made no use whatever of M. Brialmont's compilation. Creditable as it is, when considered as the work of a foreigner, who had nothing better to guide him than the popular literature of this country,

I should have overloaded my pages with matter, sometimes not very relevant, if I had translated his narrative. But both his estimate of the Duke's character, as a military commander and a politician, and his parallel between the Duke and the Emperor Napoleon, are too valuable not to be brought within the reach of every English reader. They will be found in the Appendix.

My own recollections of the great man whose biographer, after all, circumstances have enabled me to become, are not only clear, but in some measure sacred. They can never pass from me while life remains. Yet in striving to paint him as he was, in the senate, in the cabinet, as chief of the army, and as a man, I have not, it will be seen, trusted entirely to them. To my old and valued friend and comrade, General Sir George Brown, long the Duke's Adjutant-General, and long treated by him with perfect openness, I am indebted for letters which throw great light upon the Duke's manner of acting at the Horse Guards. I have the happiness also, to be honoured by the kindly regard of some of his Grace's friends, both in the House of Lords and out of it; and these have rendered me the greatest assistance by affording me the benefit of their impressions, that I might compare them with my own. In this respect my thanks are especially due to the present Duke of Wellington; to his amiable brother,

the late Lord Charles Wellesley; to the Earl of Clanwilliam; to the Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury; to Miss Burdett Coutts; to Captain Watts; and to Mr. Algernon Greville, for many years his Grace's confidential private secretary.

I have done the best that I could, with admirable materials. Had it been possible to tell the whole truth, I might, perhaps, have done better. As it is, I give my volumes to the world, not without the hope, that they will place the character of the Great Duke in a juster point of view, than any which it had previously attained.

G. R. GLEIG.

London: December, 1859.

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MEMOIR

OF THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

CAPITULATION OF PARIS.—EXECUTION OF LABEDOYÈRE AND NEY.—THE DUKE'S PART IN THESE TRANSACTIONS.—HIS UNPOPULARITY IN PARIS, AND THE CAUSES OF IT.—HIS MANNER OF NOTICING INSULTS.—THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.—HIS GENERAL ORDER TO IT.

THE capitulation of Paris and the removal of its garrison beyond the Loire brought the short but terrible war of 1815 to an end. The few fortresses which still held out soon opened their gates to the invaders, and France became for the second time a conquered country. But both the moral condition of the vanquished and the temper of the victors were very different from what they had been in 1814. The former showed themselves uneasy under the consciousness of broken pledges; the latter had become exasperated by the remembrance of recent losses. It was therefore determined, by common consent among the allied sovereigns, to convey to France such a lesson as should render her less prone than she had heretofore been to disturb the peace of the world;

and the French people looked forward with intense anxiety to what was about to befall them.

The part which the Duke of Wellington played at this critical juncture in public affairs has been fully explained in the previous volume. Alone he withstood the policy of dismemberment, and well nigh alone secured the return of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon to the throne. Doubtless his main object in both cases was the same, viz. to secure the tranquillity of Europe, which was essentially "mixed up," to use his own emphatic expression, with the continued tranquillity of the French people. But the benefits thereby conferred upon France herself were not on that account the less real; and they undoubtedly deserved a different return from that which she awarded to her benefactor.

Rightly or wrongly, the Duke had received an impression that the difficulties which stood in the way of an immediate resumption of authority by Louis XVIII. were only to be overcome by the influence of one man. He believed that with Fouché, Duke of Otranto, it rested either to prolong indefinitely, or to dissipate in a day, the spirit of resistance which continued to manifest itself in Paris after the arrival of the allied armies under its walls. He knew likewise that Fouché was not only willing but anxious to take office under the Bourbons, and he did not hesitate to press upon the King the policy of gratifying that desire. Now if there was in France one man more distasteful than another to the entire royalist party, it was Fouché. Besides serving Napoleon during the hundred days, he had been a member of the convention which condemned Louis XVI. to death, and was regarded in consequence (perhaps not unnaturally by the *émigrés*) as something

more than a rebel — as a regicide. The proposal to admit such a man into the king's confidence was therefore received by Louis XVIII. and his courtiers with undisguised repugnance, and though the former eventually yielded to a state necessity, and accepting Fouché, restored to Wellington his friendship, the latter never could be brought to regard their colleague except with abhorrence; a feeling which they extended, though perhaps in a lesser degree, to his illustrious protector.

It belongs to the historian of the nineteenth century to describe the immediate results of these negotiations; how the Committee of Safety dissolved itself; how Napoleon fled to the coast; and how Louis XVIII., passing unostentatiously from St. Denis to the Tuilleries, resumed without opposition the functions of government. The state of France was indeed, both then and for many weeks afterwards, melancholy enough. The armies of Austria and Russia, which had already approached the frontier, soon began to pass it, and poured day by day successive columns into the interior. Wellington and Blücher both received reinforcements, till by and by little short of a million of armed men, with the trains of horses and beasts of burden necessary to expedite their movements, covered the face of the earth like a swarm of locusts. Among his own troops Wellington continued to maintain the same strict discipline which he had exacted from them during the previous year. He would suffer no outrage to be offered either to the persons or the property of the inhabitants, and punished even trifling irregularities with extreme severity. It was indeed essential to the maintenance of order that both man and beast should be regularly fed; and in the absence of better means of collecting supplies, recourse

was had to requisitions. But requisitions as directed by him, however inconvenient they might be for the moment, brought no permanent loss on individuals, for they were conducted in a spirit of strict justice, and as far as might be, of consideration, and even of forbearance. The process was this : the commissary-in-chief made his calculations as to the amount of food and forage which would be required for the several divisions of the army. Parties commanded by officers were then sent out from these divisions into the districts severally marked off for them, and cattle, corn, and other necessaries being taken from the farmers and proprietors, receipts regularly drawn up and signed were given in exchange. On the arrival of the convoys at the head quarters of their respective divisions, entries were made of the various articles received, and of the names of the parties supplying them ; and a price being affixed to each, the amounts were calculated and placed upon record, in order that they might be presented for payment in due time to the French government. Thus, while the country at large was compelled to maintain the force which it had brought upon itself, and which kept it down, individuals were protected against contributing more than their just proportions to the general expenditure ; while all those acts of rapine and violence which usually accompany the system of requisitions were prevented.

In strong contrast to the Duke's proceedings were those of the commanders of corps and divisions in the allied armies. These not only failed to restrain their troops from plunder, but if they did not encourage they certainly winked at enormities of every kind. Austrians, Russians, and above all, Prussians, lived,

wherever they came, at free quarters, till the people, goaded into acts of desperate reprisal, seemed ripe, in many districts, for a war of partisans. It is in reference to this state of things that, in a letter to his brother, dated Paris, 19th of July, 1815, the Duke thus expresses himself:—"If the Allies will only be a little moderate, that is, if they will prevent plunder by their troops, and take only what is necessary for their own security, we may hope for permanent peace; but I confess that I am a little afraid of them, they are all behaving exceedingly ill." Nor was it at the hands of foreigners alone that the peaceable inhabitants suffered outrage. From the Loire to the Seine, and from the Seine to the Rhine, every highway and cross road was beset by banditti, who robbed travellers and sacked villages, and plundered even such smaller towns as had escaped the more systematic pillage of the invaders. The consequence was, such a complete dislocation of society as threatened to reduce it to its elements, if it did not impel an entire people to make common cause with the armed force which still held together south of the Loire. And the latter result appeared at one moment to be imminent.

It is a noticeable fact that, with this impatience under anarchy, there was mixed up in the minds of the French people no feeling of favour towards the emperor. To him, on the contrary, and to his mad ambition, were attributed all the ills from which the country suffered; and loyalty to the House of Bourbon became a sort of frenzy in many of the provinces. Attendant upon this feeling, and co-ordinate with it, arose a wild attachment to the Church of Rome. To be suspected of a leaning towards the reformed faith

was to be marked, either as a Buonapartist or a Republican; and Buonapartists, Republicans, and Protestants became alike the objects of a blind persecution. It is characteristic of the Duke that, though deprecating the evils here spoken of, he was careful to distinguish between the impulsive actions of a mob, and the deliberate purposes of a nation. While over zealous persons at home blamed the French government, and invited him to remonstrate against what was assumed to be its intolerance in religious matters, he not only vindicated the king from being a party to the outrages complained of, but in a letter to the secretaries of the Protestant Association* pointed out that General La Garde, who was sent to Nismes in order to suppress them, had lost his life in that service. Indeed, he went still further, for in the following December, when writing on the same subject to Mr. Cooke, he says, "The truth is, that the Protestants at and about Nismes—for observe there is no disturbance anywhere else — are, and have been from the commencement of the revolution, Jacobins and Buonapartists; they commenced the war against the Royalists and Romanists at the period of the return of Buonaparte, and the latter have since carried it on with superior forces."

It was amid such scenes as these that the French king prepared to bring together the chambers of peers and deputies; and to restore, as far as might then be done, the authority of a constitutional government. His ministers, however, did not recommend either the recall of the parliament which the revolution of the

* Dated Paris, 28th November 1815. See Wellington Despatches.

previous March had dissolved, or the reassembling of the bodies which had acted as such under Napoleon. The latter had exhibited such strong democratic tendencies that even the Emperor's iron hand proved unequal to restrain them; and it was felt that any attempt under existing circumstances to work in harmony with them must result in failure. The former would have clashed with certain modifications introduced during the 100 days into the charter; and as the wisdom of these changes had been recognised at Ghent, it was judged inexpedient to interfere with them now. A middle course was accordingly adopted. The electoral laws passed by Napoleon were accepted, and the French people were, by royal proclamation, invited to return deputies upon a principle in agreement with these laws. One necessary effect of this arrangement was, to throw a great deal of additional power into the hands of the préfets of departments; and as the préfets nominated by Napoleon had been everywhere superseded by violent adherents of the House of Bourbon, a parliament got together under such auspices bade fair to consist exclusively of ultra-royalists. Now this was not a state of things to which certain influential members of the cabinet could assent. Many préfets, nominated at the instigation of the Duc d'Angoulême, were in consequence set aside, and thus, before the government began to work in earnest, it was already at strife within itself.

If there were differences of opinion on this subject between Talleyrand and Fouché on the one hand, and the Duc de Richelieu and M. Pasquier on the other, the views of these statesmen and of their adherents on both sides diverged still more widely on the subject of

the liberty of the press. The former contended for the wisdom of relaxing the ordinances by which Napoleon had gagged it, and endeavoured to show that in the temper on which the nation had fallen, only such public writers as inculcated principles of order and obedience to constitutional monarchy would be attended to. The latter, with whose opinions those of Louis himself coincided, saw the matter in a different light. The consequence was a violent altercation, resulting in a compromise. The censorship, while rigidly enforced towards newspapers, was withdrawn from books and pamphlets—a slight concession which the king was with difficulty persuaded to make, and to which he did not assent until the ordinance had lain some days unsigned beside him.

Having settled this point, the French cabinet took next into consideration the propriety of disbanding the army of the Loire. The army in question had, indeed, at the instigation of Marshal D'Avoust, hoisted the white flag; but the spirit which pervaded it was known to be the reverse of friendly to the new order of things, and the king and his government distrusted it. Hence the decree for its dissolution went forth, which 250,000 allied troops, so disposed as to render any attempt at resistance visionary, enabled the war minister to carry into effect without the loss of a single life.

The restoration of 1814 had been marked not only by great forbearance on the part of the Allies, but by extreme lenity in the proceedings of the legitimate government. No Frenchman suffered for the part which he had played, either in the first Revolution or under the Empire; and if attempts were made to interfere with property acquired in times of confusion,

they were made covertly, and not without at least some show of reason. It was felt now that justice must temper mercy; and a list of proscribed persons was early drawn up, which included among others the names of Colonel Labedoyère and Marshal Ney. The circumstances attending the capture of these individuals were not only extraordinary in themselves, but bore a remarkable similarity the one to the other. Both had been warned by the police of what was about to happen; to both money was advanced through Fouché, in order to facilitate their escape, and both fled for their lives. But a strange infatuation seems to have come over them ere they crossed the French frontier, and both returned and were taken. Of Labedoyère it may suffice to say, that in spite of the remonstrances of Count Flahaut and General Excelmans, he had the temerity to show himself in Paris; and that even after his arrest he could hardly be brought to believe in the reality of the danger which menaced him. He was tried, found guilty, condemned, and executed. But the case of Ney, though quite as simple in itself, requires that we should go somewhat more into detail respecting it; because there are still many French, and we regret to add, some English writers, so misjudging as to assert that the life of that brave man was sacrificed to a feeling of unworthy jealousy on the part of the subject of this memoir.

Two courses are adopted in this case. By those who do not scruple when it suits their own purposes to falsify history, the bold assertion is hazarded, that the death of Ney was neither more nor less than a judicial murder; that his safety had been guaranteed by the terms of the capitulation of Paris, and that the Duke

of Wellington, being a party to that capitulation, might and ought to have stopped the trial, or at all events should have arrested the execution of the sentence, which the court passed upon the accused. We are not now discussing the expediency of the course adopted by the French government. That Ney deserved his fate, no one who regards treason in a state as the highest offence against society will venture to deny. The policy of exacting from one so popular both with the army and with the nation the full measure of his guilt, is quite a different question; but that there was anything in the capitulation of Paris to cover Ney's offences, or to ensure to him indemnity from their consequences, is wholly disproved, first, by reference to the terms of the treaty itself, and next, by looking to the line of conduct which Ney under the circumstances considered it necessary to adopt.

The negotiations which led to the capitulation of Paris were conducted by commissioners nominated on both sides by the commanders-in-chief of the hostile armies, and were subsequently ratified by the commanders themselves. They had reference to the surrender of the French capital, and to nothing else; to the evacuation of the city by the French troops which then held it, and to its subsequent military occupation by the armies of the Allies. They resulted in a written deed or agreement, consisting of eighteen articles, which pledged the French commanders on the one part, and the generals of the allied troops on the other, to certain proceedings; which, it is but fair to add, were frankly and conscientiously adhered to on both sides. After fixing, in the nine opening articles, the exact space of time which should be allowed for the evacuation of the

city, and for the removal of such materials and baggage as the French troops were permitted to carry with them ; after providing for the safe conveyance of sick, wounded, and women, and stipulating that as many officers of the line as had taken service with the national guard, should be allowed to dispose of themselves as they saw best, the deed went on to provide —

"10. The commanders-in-chief of the English and Prussian armies undertake to recognise, and to cause to be recognised by their subordinates, the authorities which they find in actual existence, whatever these may be."

"11. Public property, with the exception of articles contraband of war, shall be respected, whether it belong to government or to the municipal authorities; and with the administration and management of it the allied forces will in no way interfere."

"12. The persons and property of individuals shall in like manner be respected, and the inhabitants and all other persons resident in the capital shall continue to enjoy their rights and liberties without being molested, or any inquiry made respecting the employments which they follow, or may have followed, or their political conduct and opinions."

It is quite clear that this last clause, which has been twisted into a pledge of safety for Marshal Ney, was not regarded at the moment as touching in any manner upon his case, either by the parties to the treaty or by himself. Doubtless both the Duke and Marshal Blücher, had they found Ney within the walls of Paris when they entered it, would have considered themselves bound to leave him, so far as they were concerned, un-

molested. But they neither claimed nor had any right to claim, the power of dictating to the French king how he was to act towards one of the leaders in the late revolt. The parties concluding the treaty were but the chiefs of two allied armies which had invested Paris. They claimed no greater amount of authority over that city and its inhabitants than the laws of war, restricted by the terms of a special agreement, conceded to them ; and being put in possession of the city, they exercised that amount of authority and none other. Moreover it is clear that Ney took a similar view of their position and rights, from the fact that he applied for and obtained a passport from Fouché, and escaped under an assumed name, three days after the treaty was signed. Nor can it be pleaded that he was ignorant at the moment of the terms on which Paris had been surrendered. There is reason to believe that his opinion was solicited and obtained—as well after the French negotiators returned from the allied headquarters, as before they went forth upon their mission. And it is beyond dispute that Fouché, being at that time head of the Provisional Government, whether fortified by Ney's approval or not, authorised the Prince of Eckmuhl to treat at all. Now Fouché it was who not only gave to Ney his passports after the treaty was signed, but supplied him with money to cover the expenses of his flight. Is it to be credited for a moment, either that Ney would have accepted these favours, or that Fouché would have pressed them upon him, had not both, after well considering the terms of the treaty, arrived at the conclusion that, however binding they might be on the leaders of the English and Prussian armies, they neither restricted, nor were intended to

restrict the authority of the French king or of his government.

Again, the decree which exempted from the general amnesty Ney, Labedoyère, and their companions in misfortune, bore date the 24th of July, and was countersigned by Fouché himself. No reclamation was made against it at the moment, either by Ney or any of his friends, on the ground that the Marshal's safety had been provided for by one of the articles in the convention of Paris. "Another proof," says the Duke, "of what was the opinion of the Duc d'Otranto, of the king's ministers, and of all the persons most interested in establishing the meaning now attempted to be given to the 12th article of the Convention of the 3rd of July, is the king's proclamation of the 24th of July, by which nineteen persons are ordered for trial, and thirty-eight persons are ordered to quit Paris, and to reside in particular parts of France under the observation and superintendence of the police, till the Chambers should decide upon their fate."

Did the Duc d'Otranto, did any of the persons who were the objects of this proclamation, did any person on their behalf, ever then or now, claim for them the protection of the 12th article? Certainly the convention was then understood as it ought to be understood now, viz. that it was exclusively military, and was never intended to bind the then existing government of France, or any government which should succeed it.*

* See Memorandum respecting Marshal Ney, Paris, 15th November, 1815. See also the Duke's letter to Earl Bathurst, written on the 13th July, long before there was any question about Ney's life or liberty. In answer to an inquiry instituted by the Government, he there says, "The Convention binds nobody, excepting the par-

But this is not all. Whatever virtue there might be in the 12th article, so far as regarded others, Marshal Ney was clearly not benefited by it. It speaks of persons who shall be found by the Allies in Paris, and nowhere else. Now Marshal Ney did not remain to witness the entrance of the Allies into the French capital. He obtained his passport and quitted Paris four-and-twenty hours previously to their occupation of that city.

Referring the reader to the documents from which we have just quoted, and which appear to settle this question beyond the possibility of further discussion, we proceed to notice the second, though less serious charge, which is still preferred against the Duke: viz. that by declining to exert his influence in Ney's favour, either as the representative of the English government at the French court, or as the individual to whom the reigning family were mainly indebted for their throne, he incurred, if not directly, at all events indirectly, the odium of having assented to the execution.

It will be borne in mind that Ney fled from Paris on the 6th of July. The Allies marched in on the 7th,

ties to it — viz.: the French army on one side, and the allied armies under Marshal Prince Blücher and myself on the other. And the 12th article cannot be considered, and never was intended to bind any other persons or authorities whatever, unless they should become parties to the Convention."

This view of the case is fully confirmed by Carnôt, who was, with Fouché and Ney, himself a party to the opening of the negotiation. "It was resolved," he says, "to send to the allied generals a commission specially charged to propose a purely military convention for surrendering Paris into their hands, avoiding all political discussion, because we could not foresee what the Allies might intend to do when they were united."—*Exposé de la Conduite politique de M. Carnôt.*

and the king made his public entry at noon on the 8th. It does not appear that Ney, either by writing or otherwise, made at this time any attempt to enlist the sympathies of the Duke in his own favour. Indeed, if the Duke thought of him at all, it would naturally be as of a man who had wisely provided for his own safety, and after whom no search was likely to be made. For the Duke was not unacquainted with the measures which Fouché had adopted to save the lives of those most deeply committed, and certainly did not condemn them. Again, it was not till the 24th of July that the list of persons to be brought to trial was sanctioned by royal ordinance. This delay of itself might have sufficed to place them beyond the reach of danger. But the clemency of the government went still further; for, with the scarcely disguised purpose of affording to the proscribed ample opportunity of escape, several weeks were permitted to elapse ere the execution of the warrants was ordered. Ney, like Labedoyère, seemed disposed at first to avail himself of the opportunity. He directed his steps towards Switzerland, and had arrived at Nantua, a place within a few leagues of the frontier, when a fatal longing to remain in his own country took possession of him. He returned accordingly to his family seat at Bossonis, and remained there without any attempt at concealment, till, on the 18th of August, an over-zealous royalist préfet, M. Lacorde by name, caused him to be arrested. That the French government was by no means grateful for this act of spontaneous zeal is now well known. It desired to obtain credit for energy at home and abroad, but was not anxious to incur the risks necessarily attendant upon the trial of such criminals as Marshal Ney. Yet, Ney

having been once brought a prisoner to Paris, no alternative remained except to proceed against him. We need not pause to describe what followed. Marshal Moncey, after first consenting, by and by refused to preside over a military tribunal which was directed to sit in judgment on one of his old companions in arms. The refusal was accepted by the royalists as a proof that a general conspiracy had been entered into by the army, and the House of Peers was called upon to deal with the case. Ney was ably defended, and had his cause considered by a body which would have evaded the duty had it been possible to do so. But the result was never doubtful. It was proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that, long before his promise to bring back Buonaparte in an iron cage, he had pledged himself to support the invader. And the appeal which he made to the capitulation of Paris was rejected. A majority of 157 peers to 1 found him guilty of high treason; 142 voted for his death. He was shot, in the garden of the Luxembourg, about 9 o'clock in the morning of the 8th of December, 1815, and died, as he had lived, a brave man.

Such is the substance of this eventful history; and now come the questions, first: Why did not the Duke of Wellington, as representing the English government, apply officially for the pardon of the criminal? and, secondly: Why, if this were impossible, did he abstain from exercising his personal influence in so good a cause?

The answer to the former of these questions is obvious enough. Whatever might have been the nature of its wishes in the case, the English government gave no authority to the Duke of Wellington to express them.

For it was felt in London, as well as in St. Petersburg and at Vienna, that the king of France, having made up his mind how to act, any movement from without which should be strong enough to shake his resolution, must shake his authority at the same time, and probably disgust the French people. The English government could not, therefore, come forward without doing violence to the principles by which it professed to be actuated. Official interference by the Duke was, under such circumstances, impossible, had he even been, as he was not, the official representative of that government.

The second point raised requires to be passed more carefully under review.

And first, it is not the fact that the Duke abstained from exercising such influence as he then possessed in Marshal Ney's favour. He refused, indeed, to admit that the capitulation of Paris interposed any obstacle to the due course of law in France. He knew, and had long before expressed his conviction to the contrary; and the Duke was quite incapable of tampering with the truth, be the temptation to do so ever so urgent. But he expressed himself both openly and in private circles, while the trial was going on, adverse to the execution of Ney, should sentence of death be passed upon him. More than this it was not in his power to attempt. For the cabinet which he had contributed to form had already fallen to pieces; and the new ministers by whom the French king was surrounded scarcely treated the English general with common civility. Nothing, indeed, would have been more acceptable to the members of that government, than that the Duke of Wellington should have made a private request which, on the grounds of public duty, they might be

able to refuse. With respect, again, to the king, it is indeed just possible, though it is by no means probable, that a personal application from the Duke might have had great weight with him; but in the then state of public feeling in France, success and failure might have been equally pregnant with disaster. Success must have resulted in the resignation of the ministers, who would thereby be taught that the will of a foreigner was more potent with the sovereign than their own. Failure would have placed the Duke in a false position towards the only person connected with the government of France who retained, or professed to retain, any recollection of the important services which he had rendered to their country.

It appears, then, that for the ungenerous reproach which has been cast upon the Duke of Wellington, in connection with the death of Marshal Ney, there is no ground whatever. His own government had determined, wisely, as we believe, to keep aloof from everything like interference in the internal affairs of France. Thus resolved, it not only gave to its representative no authority to ask the life of Ney, but prohibited him from doing so. The Duke could not supersede the British ambassador in this matter; nor was it possible for him, as a party to the capitulation of Paris, to appeal to that deed as barring the execution of the sentence which the House of Peers had passed. Such cases as that of Ney were not contemplated when the treaty in question was drawn up and ratified; and he had distinctly stated his opinion to that effect five months before Ney was arrested. Lastly, he was not in a condition to ask personal favours, either of the king or of his ministers, to whom, but especially to the

latter, he happened to be particularly obnoxious. How, then, can it be insinuated that he was in any degree, even the most remote, responsible for that act of just, though perhaps impolitic, retribution?

One great cause of the animosity entertained towards the Duke at this time was, the part which duty compelled him to take in stripping the museums and galleries of Paris of some of the stolen treasures with which Napoleon had enriched them. Even Talleyrand objected to that proceeding, and equally with the king appealed to the eleventh article of the capitulation of Paris as guarding against it. But the Duke having been requested by the King of the Netherlands to receive for him certain pictures which, as it happened, Louis XVIII. when at Ghent had promised to restore, would not listen to their remonstrances; and finding both the minister and the custodiers of the Louvre resolved to yield only to force, made up his mind to employ force, should such be necessary. The following is his own account of this transaction, and of the grounds on which he felt himself justified in becoming a prominent actor in it.

After stating some particulars of his negotiations with the French government, and of the causes which led to them, he goes on to say:—"The Prince de Talleyrand promised me an answer on the following evening, which not having received, I called upon him at night, and had another discussion with him on the subject, in which he informed me that the king could give no orders upon it; that I might act as I thought proper, and that I might communicate with M. Dinon. I sent my aide-de-camp, Lieut.-Colonel Freemantle to M. Dinon in the morning, who informed him that

he had no orders to give any pictures out of the gallery, and that he could give none without the use of force. I then sent Lieut.-Colonel Freemantle to the Prince de Talleyrand to inform him of this answer, and to acquaint him that the troops should go the next morning at 12 o'clock to take possession of the King of the Netherlands' pictures, and to point out that if any disturbance resulted from this measure, the king's ministers, and not I, were responsible. Lieut.-Colonel Freemantle likewise informed M. Dinon that the same measure would be adopted.

"It was not necessary, however, to send the troops, as a Prussian guard had always remained in possession of the gallery, and the pictures were taken without the necessity of calling for those of the army under my command, excepting as a working party to assist in taking them down and packing them.

"It has been stated, that in being the instrument of removing the pictures belonging to the King of the Netherlands from the gallery of the Tuileries, I have been guilty of a breach of a treaty which I had myself made; and as there is no mention of the museums in the treaty of the 25th of March, and it now appears that the treaty meant is the military convention of Paris, it is necessary to see how that convention affects the museum.

"It is not now necessary to discuss the question whether the Allies were or not at war with France. There is no doubt whatever, that their armies entered Paris under a military convention, concluded with an officer of the government, the prefect of the department of the Seine, and an officer of the army; being a representative of each of the authorities existing in Paris at

the moment, and authorised by those authorities to deal and conclude for them.

" The article of the convention which it is supposed is broken is the eleventh, which relates to public property. I positively deny that this article referred at all to the museums and galleries of pictures.

" The French commissioners, in the original project, proposed an article to provide for the security of this description of property. Prince Blücher would not consent to it, as he said there were pictures in the gallery which had been taken from Prussia, which his majesty Louis XVIII. had promised to restore, but which had never been restored. I stated this circumstance to the French commissioners, and they then offered to adopt the article, with an exception of the Prussian pictures. To this offer I answered that I stood there as the ally of all the nations in Europe, and anything that was granted to Prussia, I must claim for other nations. I added, that I had no instructions regarding the museums, nor any grounds on which to form a judgment how the sovereigns would act; that they certainly would insist upon the king performing his engagements, and that I recommended that the article should be omitted altogether, and that the question should be reserved for the decision of the sovereigns when they should arrive.

" Thus the question regarding the museum stands under the treaty. The convention of Paris is silent upon it, and there was a communication upon the subject, which reserved the decision for the sovereigns.

" Those who acted for the French government at the time, considered that the successful army had a right to, and would touch the contents of the museum ; and

they made an attempt to save them by an article in the military convention. This article was rejected, and the claim of the Allies to the pictures was broadly advanced by the negotiators on their part ; and this was stated as the ground for rejecting the article. Not only, then, the military convention did not, in itself, guarantee the possession, but the transaction above recited tended to weaken the claim to the possession by the French government, which is founded upon the silence of the treaty of Paris, 11th May, 1814."

The Duke then proceeds to explain that the circumstances of all parties were greatly changed, that a concession which had for its object to conciliate the French army in 1814, was recommended by no considerations of policy in 1815 ; and thus sums up the argument.

"The feeling of the people of France upon this subject must be one of national vanity only. It must be a desire to retain these specimens of the arts, not because Paris is the fittest depository for them, as, upon that subject, artists, connoisseurs, and all who have written upon it agree that the whole ought to be removed to their ancient seats ; but because they were obtained by military concessions, of which they are the trophies.

"The same feelings which induce the people of France to wish to retain the pictures and statues of other nations, would naturally induce other nations to wish, now that success is on their side, that the property should be returned to their rightful owners, and the allied sovereigns must feel a desire to gratify them.

"It is, besides, on many accounts desirable, as well for their own happiness as for that of the world, that the people of France, if they do not already feel that Europe is too strong for them, should be made sensible

of it; and that, whatever may be the extent, at any time, of their momentary and partial success against any one or any number of individual powers in Europe, the day of retribution must come.

"Not only, then, would it, in my opinion, be unjust in the sovereigns to gratify the people of France on this subject at the expense of their own people, but the sacrifice they would make would be impolitic, as it would deprive them of the opportunity of giving the people of France a great moral lesson."*

It seems difficult to resist the weight of this argument; and the lapse of well nigh half a century has probably convinced the more considerate of French statesmen themselves, that the conclusions at which the Duke arrived were the right ones. But it was not so in 1815. All the odium of what was called the plunder of Paris fell upon him. He was accused of having cajoled the garrison of that city into a capitulation, which he seized the first occasion to violate; and ministers and marshals took every opportunity, in public and private, of marking the sense which they entertained of his demerits. Two rather ludicrous instances of the extent to which this feeling was carried, and of the results to which it led, may be given.

There occurs in the public despatches, a letter written by the Duke in French, and addressed to the Duc de ——. The individual, whose name was, from motives of delicacy, kept back by the Duke himself, we are no longer called upon to conceal. It was the Duc de Duras, who, on the receipt of a note misdirected to him, wrote

* Letter to Viscount Castlereagh, 23rd Sept. 1815.

a somewhat unmannerly reply, which drew from the Duke of Wellington the following rejoinder:

"M. le Duc,—I have had the honour to receive your letter without date, in which you return to me a note which you consider to be an invitation to dinner 'in a somewhat royal style.' In reply, I beg of you, M. le Duc, to believe, that the note was not intended for you, and I have to offer a thousand excuses for its having been mis-sent.

"It does not contain an invitation to dinner — either 'in a royal style,' or in any other style; but merely a promise to dine with some one on the 28th. That some one is the Duc d'Otranto; and I very much regret that my secretary should have committed the mistake of reading your name instead of that of the individual who wrote to me, proposing that I should dine with him on a certain day.

"Such is the true history of this invitation to dinner 'in a somewhat royal style.' I send you herewith the sort of invitation which you desire to have.

"I have the honour to be, &c."

This was very silly: the act of a pettish man, prompt to take offence where none could be intended; but it had its political meaning too. The second occurrence to which we have referred might have led to graver consequences, had not the Duke been too high minded to treat it otherwise than with contempt. His grace was in the habit, when in Paris, of attending the levees of the king of France; and from being, *par excellence*, the honoured guest on all such occasions, he found himself suddenly treated with neglect. One marshal after another drew back when he approached, or returned his

greetings with studied coldness; and at last, as if by common consent, they all walked away from him. The king, though, to his shame be it spoken, he was not free from the common feeling of the hour, appeared to regard this as rather a strong measure; and approaching the Duke, expressed his regret that his marshals should so conduct themselves. "Never mind, sire," was the Duke's ready answer, "your majesty need not distress yourself. It is not the first time they have turned their backs on me." A witty people like the French can relish a joke, even if it be directed against themselves; and the saying having got abroad, it produced an immediate effect upon those to whom it related. There might be little increase of cordiality, but at all events, there was no more turning of their backs by the marshals on the Duke of Wellington, either at the levees or anywhere else.

Apart from these grounds of personal annoyance, the Duke was at this time a good deal disturbed by the growing feeling of animosity to foreigners which began to show itself among the French people. For this, indeed, the disorderly conduct of many of the allied officers and troops gave too much reason. Accordingly, on the 20th of May, he wrote to Earl Bathurst to this effect: "As we keep our troops here for nothing, and it is impossible to say what may be done under the system of plunder which it is purposed to adopt, it is but right you should send us as many as you can;" and in September he is obliged to remonstrate strongly with the officer commanding the brigade of cavalry at Beauvais on the marauding habits of some, even of the British soldiers stationed there. But by little and little affairs righted them-

selves. Finally, on the first of October, the draft of that famous treaty was submitted to the Duc de Richelieu, which brought order out of chaos. The boundaries of France were fixed; certain cessions of fortresses and territory of trifling extent were executed; and an army of 150,000 foreigners was put in military occupation of such districts as gave to it complete command of the country. It was first proposed that the period of occupation should extend to seven years. After some discussion, a term of five years was substituted, subject, however, to a limit of three years if considered expedient; and it was further arranged that during that period the foreign troops should be paid and supplied by France, and that France should pay, as an indemnity for expenses incurred in the war, the sum of seven hundred millions of francs.

It has been shown elsewhere that to the command of this army the Duke of Wellington was appointed. In what spirit he proposed to enter upon his important charge, the reader will be able to judge for himself after he has perused the subjoined letter:—

"*To Viscount Castlereagh.*

"Paris, 19th Sept., 1815.

"My dear Lord,—I have perused the draft of the proposed treaty. My opinion is, that the principle of our conduct should be not to interfere in the common concerns of the French government; and that we should not pass our own line with our troops, excepting for the purpose of making war upon the King of France, which is not a very probably event, or for that of assisting him upon his requisition.

"I do not think that his requisition alone ought to

be a sufficient justification for the interference of the allied forces in the internal concerns of France. The commanding officer must act according to his discretion and the best of his judgment, and he must think the case one likely to affect the tranquillity of Europe unless checked immediately.

"In my opinion, the ministers of the four allied courts, and probably of the sovereigns who furnish a quota to the force stationed at Paris, should be a sort of permanent council, and should deliberate upon passing events at Paris; should be in constant correspondence with the commanding officer of the allied force, and should make him acquainted with all that occurs, and their opinion upon it. I do not mean this to relieve him of the necessity of judging for himself, and all the responsibility attached to it. But it would have the advantage of making him acquainted with the real facts, and the opinions of those most capable of forming an opinion, most interested in forming a just one, and who are trusted by the sovereigns whose armies he would command."

Two more documents, both of them accessible to the world, we here subjoin; one indicating the Duke's real opinion of that army which he has been described as undervaluing, and indeed denouncing, in all his despatches; the other, because it sets forth in few words the system of management which was never for a moment relaxed, as long as foreigners kept military possession of the French soil, and the Duke commanded them.

Writing to Lord Bathurst on the 23rd of October, 1815, concerning the composition of the British contingent, and referring to certain proposed reductions in the

army at home, he says:—"My opinion is, that the best troops we have, probably the best in the world, are the British infantry, particularly the old infantry that has served in Spain. This is what we ought to keep up, and what I wish above all others to retain. The cavalry, that which is the expensive branch of the cavalry, the horses, may be put down in peace; and upon the renewal of war it is more easy to recruit them, or even horses for the artillery, than it is to get together a good body of infantry. For this reason I would recommend you not to lose your good infantry if you can keep it; and to reform rather the horses of your cavalry and artillery to the utmost, and all the expensive parts of your establishments.

"I should wish to have as much British infantry as I can get, next to them the German legion, and next to them Hanoverian infantry."

The following memorandum, to be communicated by the Duke's quartermaster-general to general officers commanding corps and divisions, speaks for itself:—

"Paris, 29th Oct. 1815.

"The circumstances attending the present situation of the army render it expedient* that Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington should call the attention of the officers under your command to the necessity of the strictest discipline and most exact regularity of the troops in the cantonments which they are about to occupy; and in order to ensure the uniform conduct of the service, His Grace desires that the following points may be attended to:—

"Billets are to be made by the mayors, or persons

* Vol. xii. Wellington Despatches, p. 674.

acting for them. They are to be applied for by officers of the quartermaster-general's department of divisions; or, if there are no officers of the quartermaster-general's department, by staff officers of divisions or brigades; or, if there are no staff officers, by quartermasters.

"When there are no mayors, or persons having authority to issue billets, then billets are to be arranged and portioned by the officers of the quartermaster-general's department of the division; or, if there are no officers of the quartermaster-general's department, by staff officers of divisions or brigades; or, if there are no staff officers, by quartermasters.

"All billets, when granted, are to be made use of.

"If the owner of a house refuses a billet, it is to be made good, if necessary, by force; but this measure must be sanctioned by the officers of the quartermaster-general's department of divisions; or, if there are no officers of the quartermaster-general's department, by the staff officers of divisions or brigades; if there is no staff officer, by the quartermaster authorised to arrange the billets.

"If the owner of a house takes away his furniture, or by other means endeavours to deter officers from entering the billet, the commanding officer is to place soldiers in the house.

"No inhabitant is to be required to accommodate persons who are not entitled to billets, and it is particularly desired that officers will not give grounds for complaint by taking their wives or families into billets, without having the consent of the owners of the house so to do.

"Officers are to be warned against shooting over the country without having permission of the proprietors.

The general orders of the army have already given sufficient caution upon this subject.

"The situation of the troops will require that military precaution should be attended to.

"Alarm posts are to be established, guards and pickets are to be posted, and sufficient measures taken for the security of the communications, and for the safety and tranquillity of the cantonments.

"The most efficient steps are to be taken for the prompt and certain circulation of orders, so that the whole, or any part of the troops may be collected at the shortest notice.

"Attention must be paid, in the billets of soldiers, to the ammunition; to its security against accident or robbery; for this the frequent inspection by commanding officers of companies will be a precaution.

"The parks of artillery are to be formed where they can be protected. They are never to be without guards, and troops should be sufficiently near to afford them support.

"If any *attroupement*, or mutinous assembly of the inhabitants against the military takes place, the troops are to be under arms, and the *attroupement* is to be fired upon.

"Any act of violence by the inhabitants against the soldiers is to be immediately noticed, and the offenders are to be secured. The service must be respected. The general officers are to take care that the discipline and good conduct of the troops merit the respect demanded. The mayors are to be informed of the measures that will be taken, and are to be desired to warn the inhabitants against taking part in the disturbances that may subject them to military punishment.

"WELLINGTON."

CHAP. II.

MODIFICATIONS IN THE FRENCH CABINET AND CONSTITUTION.—THE DUKE OPPOSES A PREMATURE WEAKENING OF THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.—THE AFFAIR OF LAVALETTE.—THE DUKE IN ENGLAND.—CONSPIRACIES IN THE NETHERLANDS.—THE DUKE SETTLES DISPUTED CLAIMS.—HIS HOUSE IS SET ON FIRE.—AFFAIRS OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—CANTILLON'S ATTEMPT ON THE DUKE'S LIFE.—THE DUKE AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

1815-18.

THOUGH the treaty was signed in November which relieved France from the burden of maintaining a million of armed foreigners, and though different portions of that mass had already evacuated the country, it was not till the middle of December that the army of occupation could be formed; and January was considerably advanced, ere the different corps took up the positions which had been selected for them. This delay, trifling in itself, but under the circumstances unavoidable, gave great umbrage both to the French government and to the people. The former urged the Duke day by day to withdraw his troops from the capital, without, however, making any effort to provide them with suitable quarters elsewhere; the latter seized every opportunity of insulting individual officers and men as often as they imagined that they could do so with impunity. Hitherto the British army, unlike the armies of the other powers, had been restrained from exercising the common rights of conquerors. The staff alone occupied houses; the troops, including regimental officers of all ranks, were encamped in the Bois

de Boulogne. As the winter approached, exposure under canvass threatened to affect injuriously the health of the men, and the Duke gave orders for their removal as soon as the Prussians should withdraw, some into barracks on the right of the Seine, others to Versailles, and St. Germains. A ridiculous attempt was made to stay the execution of these orders, under the pretext that all the barracks specified were required for other purposes. A few hundreds of National Guards, whom the king had been allowed to embody, were at once moved in, to bring foreigners into immediate contact with whom, might, it was alleged, lead to evil consequences. The Duke's letter to the Duc de Richelieu on the subject is very characteristic. After formally communicating his intention to that minister, he goes on to say: "I find, however, that French troops have taken possession of all the barracks on the right of the Seine, and that 900 of them occupy a space which was meant for 4000, and that M. le Duc de Grammont with his company of 2000, holds St. Germains, and protests against my disturbing him. I have told M. le Duc de Grammont, that my troops shall certainly proceed to St. Germains, and that he may arrange for his own as well as he can; but I must request your excellency to take into your own hands the settlement of affairs in regard to the barracks in Paris. If his majesty does not require the services of foreign troops, we will proceed to our proper destination as soon as we can; meanwhile, I shall put my troops into cantonments, because I cannot keep them any longer in tents. If, on the other hand, his majesty requires our services in Paris, it must be evident to you that we require barracks in the city, and cantonments in this neighbour-

hood, and I beg that your excellency will arrange to provide them."

The allusion in this letter to the king's wants in connection with foreign troops, had its meaning, and could not fail to be understood. France was then without any armed force on which the government could depend. What remained of regular regiments were known to be disaffected, and were besides scattered through the provinces, while the legions, as they were called, which had been raised to supply their place, were still incomplete, and possessed little or no consistency. There had to be sure come recently into existence, the nucleus of a Royal Guard, which was made up almost exclusively of men enlisted in La Vendée, and was officered by returned emigrants. But both in its composition and in the known politics of its chiefs this force stood so completely in antagonism to the great body of the Parisians, that its presence in the capital would have been as likely to provoke as to restrain disturbances. Moreover these ultra-royalists were imbued with a spirit of the bitterest hostility towards the Allies. When later in the season the Prussians had withdrawn, and the English were left alone in and about Paris, an attempt to relieve their posts by detachments from that force, led to brawls which threatened to end in much more serious conflicts. The consequence was, that the Duke found himself obliged to interfere, and the National Guard was employed to do a work, for the performance of which the king's *corps d'élite* showed itself eminently disqualified.

The last division of the British troops withdrew from Montmartre on or about the 16th of January, 1816, and within a week from that date, the army of occupation

took up the extensive line which it was considered judicious to occupy. It stretched from the Rhine on the left, to the Pas de Calais on the right, embracing within that semicircle the strong places of Fort Louis, Bitche, Thionville, Longwy, Montmedy, Ledun, Mezières, Givet, Charlemont, Rocroy, Avesnes, Maubeuge, Landrecy, Condé, Quesnoi, Valenciennes, and Cambray. The left of this line was held by Austrians, under the command of General Frimont; Wurtemburgers and Bavarians connected them with the Prussian corps of which General Tanerszein was at the head. The Russians came next, occupying the department of the Ardennes under the command of Count Woronzow. Hanoverians, Saxons, and Danes succeeded. And last of all, on the extreme right, the English contingent took post. The Duke fixed his head quarters at Cambray, and the arrangements were complete.

It had been settled by treaty among the allied powers, that of the whole force employed in the occupation of France, England should furnish one third. The English government had agreed with the Duke of Wellington, that of the 50,000 men for whom they thus made themselves responsible, 20,000 at least should be English. But when the period arrived for fulfilling these engagements, the English government as usual did its best to evade them. The cry for economy and retrenchment had again been raised in parliament, and in order to meet it, Lord Liverpool proposed to bring home and disband as many English regiments as possible, and to supply their places abroad with foreign contingents. Now the Duke knew the value of British troops, and especially of British infantry, as compared with those of other nations, and he remonstrated strongly against the

arrangement. He wrote at the same time to Colonel Torrens, the Duke of York's military secretary, in terms indicative of the opinion at which he had already arrived respecting the consequences of too hasty a dissolution of the British army. "What I imagine is," he says, "that Government think they can get foreign troops cheaper than they can British; and they prefer to employ them, forgetting the number of years required to form the army they have got, and that if they disband it they will destroy the military profession in England. My opinion upon the whole transaction is, that now that we have toiled like slaves here to make the arrangement that has been made, Government do not like it, because some newspaper writer, or some friend in parliament dislikes it, and they will not carry it into execution. All I beg is to have positive orders, what troops to keep, and what troops to send home."

The Duke's usual determination of purpose, and the soundness of his reasoning, prevailed. There was left at his disposal such a British force as the exigencies of the time required, and he was saved the mortification of being obliged to acknowledge that "England had not fulfilled its engagements to its Allies, and to the French government."

The conditions under which these engagements had been entered into were, as was to be expected, very severe upon France. She was not only burdened with the entire cost of maintaining the army of occupation, of paying, clothing, and feeding, the men, and of providing forage for 25,000 horses, but a heavy charge was made upon her for the expenses of the late war, as well as for all the damage which, during their career of conquest her armies had inflicted since the outburst of the

Revolution upon individuals and upon corporate bodies in the various states and kingdoms of Europe. Somewhat to counterbalance the last charge, she was allowed to bring forward the claims of such French citizens as had suffered in their property by the progress of military operations, or through the system of requisitions upon which the allied troops had latterly been supplied. There ensued immediately the wildest struggle of claim against claim. Austrians, Prussians, Russians, Bavarians, Wurtembergers, — the citizens of Hamburg, the people of Spain and Portugal, the inhabitants, in short, of every town and village not being French, through which French armies had passed, were invited by their respective governments to estimate the loss which they had sustained, and they did so to the largest extent. Meanwhile, French citizens were not backward in making it appear that if France had incurred heavy debts to the stranger, the stranger was heavily indebted to her. Commissioners were appointed on both sides as a matter of course, to investigate these accounts, and the operation went on month after month as under such circumstances it is apt to do, much more to the satisfaction of the paid referees, than to that of the claimants.

The ostensible movers in all these proceedings, the appointed guardians of the rights of civilised Europe,— were the ministers of the four great powers, who, according to the plan proposed by the Duke, at once represented their respective courts at the Tuilleries, and acted together as a sort of federal council in Paris. They were all able men, and, as far as diplomatists may be so accounted, honest. Sir Charles Stuart, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothesay, represented England at that time. The Baron de Vincent acted for Austria, Count

de Goltz, was ambassador from the court of Berlin, and General Pozzo de Borgo from that of St. Petersburg. They met on fixed days to consider such points as might have arisen on the spot, or which were referred to them by their own or by other governments ; and they availed themselves as often as the need arose of the clear understanding and sound judgment of the Duke. These were invaluable in many particulars, but more so in none, than in directing them how to bring to an issue the complicated questions of private claims. The commissioners had worked at their leisure up to the month of October, 1817. They appeared to have settled all this while, an average of about four claims daily; under the pressure which the Duke then applied, they succeeded in getting fifteen daily into order. But the task appeared to be as far from reaching its accomplishment as ever ; when the Emperor of Russia in a private letter, entreated the Duke himself to undertake the responsible duties of referee. His Grace at once communicated with the representatives of the four powers, and finding them unanimous in their wish that he should accept the trust, the strong sense of duty under which he acted would not permit him to shrink from it. We need not try the reader's patience by detailing minutely the course which he pursued. Enough is done when we state, that he arranged with the French government, that one large sum should be paid as a composition for all private demands; that he caused every account to be gone through and audited with the greatest strictness and impartiality ; and that the result was, a diminution by more than one half in the amount of the claims sent in on both sides. That the French government should

have repaid his exertions on that occasion with ingratitude is not perhaps greatly to be wondered at. The Duc de Richelieu had enormous difficulties to contend against. His parliament, little manageable on any question, became furious as often as votes of credit were asked for in order to satisfy the demands of the invaders; and having settled in his own mind the utmost extent to which he could venture to go, he was both chagrined and irritated when it appeared that the Duke's decision exceeded that amount by forty millions of rents; yet the Duke's decision had reduced the total charge against France, from 800 millions of rents to 240 millions.

It is not to be supposed that, in arranging this matter, the Duke had only the difficulties to encounter which beset every man who seeks to render intelligible a complicated series of accounts. In addition to the natural desire of France to reduce the burdens to which she was liable, he had to combat the eagerness of some of the Allies, who, being greatly impoverished, were clamorous to obtain as much, and to obtain it as speedily as possible, from the nation which had brought their poverty upon them. He never lost his temper for a moment amid the contentions to which these conflicting views gave rise. On the contrary, while the Allies complained that their interest had been sacrificed, and the French king opened his parliament with a speech well calculated to excite angry feelings in the chambers, the Duke not only refrained from throwing up in disgust the commission which all had combined to force upon him, but exerted himself successfully with the house of Hope and Baring to negotiate for France a loan, without which no settlement could have been effected at all.

All this while France herself was, both in her government and throughout the provinces, in a state of great disquiet. Three parties of unequal strength contended for supremacy, as well in the country as in the legislature. The ultra-royalists, headed by the king's brothers, had destroyed M. Talleyrand's administration, and greatly harassed that of M. Richelieu. The ultra-liberals, stronger out of doors than in either house, were yet of weight enough even in parliament to turn the scale on a close division; while the moderates, under the guidance of M. Richelieu and the king, endeavoured to play off the one against the other, not always with perfect success. For the king's family affections were warm, and, though his judgment rebelled against many of the suggestions which his brothers made to him, he sometimes lacked firmness of purpose to reject them. And here again the Duke rendered essential service to the cause of order. It was impossible for the representatives of the great powers, however much they might condemn the unwise proceedings of the princes, openly to remonstrate against them. But that which it would have been unbecoming in them to attempt, the terms of personal intimacy to which Louis XVIII. admitted the Duke of Wellington gave to his grace the means of accomplishing. He pointed out to the king that the extreme views of his own household, if carried into effect, would rouse a spirit of bitter hostility against the government; and the princes, being in consequence requested to withdraw for a while from Paris, the machine of state went on. The Duke's interference on this occasion, though calculated to effect good for France, only brought upon himself the animosity of an increased

number of Frenchmen. He was already hated by the Buonapartist or democratic faction; the extreme royalists immediately went beyond them in that feeling. It is probable, however, that the first attempt made to destroy him originated with the former party. He gave a ball at his hotel in the Rue Champs-Élysées on the 25th of June, 1816, and invited the French princes to be present at it. Angry as they were, they could not decline the invitation; and his rooms were crowded with guests, when some of the servants discovered, to their horror, that the house was on fire. A barrel of oil had been placed in one of the cellars of which the windows opened to the street. From this cellar, soon after midnight, a strong smell of burning arose, and it was found, on searching into the cause, that bottles filled with gunpowder had been thrown in, and that shavings, evidently placed there for the purpose, had ignited. Had this discovery been deferred a few minutes more, the oil must have caught fire, and the consequences might have been terrible.

The Duke made very light of this occurrence. He treated it as an accident, and it soon ceased to be spoken about. No attempt was made to bring the police into action, though the presence in the cellar of bottles filled with gunpowder could never be accounted for. It happened also, at that time, that his Grace's medical advisers had recommended him to take the Cheltenham waters, and he proceeded in consequence, the day after the ball, to England. Probably this circumstance had some effect in withdrawing men's thoughts from the fire; at all events, it seems never to have been adverted to after the first outburst of alarm and indignation subsided. But though ab-

sent from France, the Duke did not deliver over the command of the army to another. He contented himself by removing his head-quarters staff to Paris, and gave instructions that reports should be sent to him as regularly as if he were on the spot to receive them.

His Grace remained in England some time, and on his return to France found that more than one event had occurred, which was not without its significancy. In the first place, the people among whom the allied troops were stationed had begun to exhibit signs of great impatience. Frequent quarrels broke out between them and the soldiers, of which the local authorities either took no notice, or invariably gave sentence against the foreigners. Now the Duke, though determined to protect the people against violence from his troops, was not disposed to disregard wrongs done to his troops by the people. He remonstrated with the Duc de Richelieu calmly, yet firmly; deprecating the possible chance that the Allies might be driven to take the matter into their own hands. And if he did not succeed in putting an entire stop to the grievance, he at all events rendered it less frequent, as well as less glaring, than it had been. In the next place, a great change had been effected, both in the composition of the French parliament, and in the system by which members were returned to the House of Representatives. The chambers had become quite unmanageable. A momentary junction of the ultra-royalists with the democrats caused the initiative to fall, as it were, from the hands of the ministers; and the passing of a law which placed the National Guard under the control of the civil power, was accepted as an attempt on the prerogative. How this measure came to be agitated at

all, was at that time a mystery; for it was certainly not favoured either by the king or by the princes. But the effect of it was to put an end to a coalition which, as it had its root in no principle more solid than personal antipathies, so it could not, in the nature of things, be enduring.

The law affecting the control of the National Guard was but the last and most startling of a succession of small defeats which the administration had sustained. In England, and other countries accustomed to constitutional government, the administration would have resigned, and been succeeded by another more in harmony with the chambers. In France, a remedy for the evil was sought for through a change in the constitution itself, and it took place in the following manner.

On the resumption of his kingly office by Louis XVIII., the constitution granted in 1814, and afterwards modified during the usurpation of the hundred days, was confirmed by royal charter. It gave votes to all Frenchmen, in their districts, who owned property of a certain value, and paid a certain amount to the public burthens, or held certain offices under the crown. All members of the legion of honour were likewise voters, and the House of Representatives, when complete, comprehended 394 members. The Upper Chamber, or House of Peers, consisted of members nominated by the crown, and the peerage itself was, by royal ordinance, declared to be hereditary.

A curious clause was inserted into the charter, which caused a constant succession of new blood to be forced, as it were, into the Chamber of Representatives. Though each parliament was called for five years, one-fifth of the number composing the lower house vacated

their seats annually. There was thus a continual ferment in some of the provinces; a continual breaking up or weakening of parties, and a continual risk that some popular cry, for or against the government, would either give more strength than was necessary to the ministers of the crown, or break up the administration at a moment's notice.

After trying, for a year and a half, in the midst of enormous difficulties, to go on with a Chamber of Deputies so constituted, the French king, acting under the advice of the Duc de Richelieu, and, as it afterwards came out, encouraged by the Emperor of Russia, made up his mind to dissolve his parliament. This was done in the month of September, 1816; and there followed immediately a royal ordonnance, which took away from members of the legion of honour, and from employés, their ex-officio votes, and settled the suffrage upon persons paying an amount of taxes considerably above that which had qualified under the ancient charter. The number of members was at the same time reduced to 260, and a large addition was made to the peerage.

The changes in question occurred during a time of great pressure, for the seasons had been unfavourable, and the crops everywhere failed. Probably that circumstance, which to bystanders appeared calculated to increase the danger, produced a directly contrary effect. But however this may be, the French nation submitted without a murmur, as if it had rested with the king to modify the constitution of the House of Representatives at his own pleasure, or to suit his own convenience. A like spirit appeared to animate the chambers also when they came together. There was no complaint amongst the deputies on the score either of

franchise raised, or numbers diminished, and for a time at least the house appeared to be as pliant as the minister could wish. Yet a blow had been struck at parliamentary government which it never recovered. The balance of parties was overthrown. The whole body of small proprietors, loyal by tradition, yet interested in the preservation of order, was disfranchised; and political power was handed over to a class, whose views have scarcely anything in common with those either of the aristocracy or the peasantry of a nation. The right of vote, out of 30,000,000 of people, was restricted to little more than 100,000 persons, almost all belonging to the middle or trading classes; and though for a while these exercised their franchises with exceeding caution, the power was there; preparing for the ministers of the crown in all time coming, difficulties innumerable; and leading in the end, through the mistake of perhaps the ablest of them all, to the results which are now actually witnessed in France.

Some time before the new parliament assembled, there occurred an event, which, however we may be disposed to speak tenderly of it, as bearing upon the characters of individuals, was not calculated to diminish the feeling of estrangement which already prevailed in France towards the English in general, and their great commander in particular. Among other persons proscribed by the ordonnance of the 24th of July, was M. Lavallette, whose treason had been in civil life kindred to that of Marshal Ney as a soldier, and who, like Ney and Labedoyère, had lingered in France long after he was made aware that no mercy would be shown to him. Arrested and brought to trial, he was found guilty and condemned to death; and the king, acting

under strong pressure from without, refused either to disallow or to commute his sentence. Lavallette's heroic wife being admitted to take leave of her husband in prison, on the night preceding the day appointed for his execution, changed dresses with him, and so passed him beyond the gates; and he lay concealed for three weeks in the hotel of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. All this however was not done without the co-operation of other parties. Three Englishmen, Sir Robert Wilson, Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. Bruce, took part in the enterprise, and succeeded at last in sending Lavallette, disguised as a British officer, beyond the frontier. Being themselves arrested, they were put upon their trial; and the British government very properly declining to interfere in their favour, they were found guilty, and underwent the term of imprisonment to which the French tribunal condemned them.

To us, all this is intelligible enough. Carried away by generous impulses, these gentlemen, two of them very young men, put, as they conceived, their own lives in jeopardy, in order to save the life of another; while the English government went no farther to protect them than by requiring that the punishment to which they might be sentenced, should not be excessive. But the French people looked upon the matter in a different light. They recollected that in more than one somewhat analogous case, the Prussians had insisted on their countrymen being given over to be dealt with according to their own laws; and they could not be brought to believe otherwise, than that the English government probably, and the Duke of Wellington certainly, were mixed up in the transaction, and that French honour had been sacrificed. Hence even they who rejoiced in

the escape of Lavallette clamoured against what they pronounced to be an unbecoming interference on the part of the English commander with the administration of the law in France; and there accrued in consequence a vast increase to the hostile temper, both of the chambers and of the people, which was already the source of considerable embarrassment to both governments.

Things were in this state, — the public mind was inflamed against England, the *coup-d'état* had been determined upon, and preparations were made for carrying it into effect,—when the French government made an overture to obtain a reduction in the numbers of the army of occupation, and a consequent saving in the expenditure necessary for its maintenance. There seems to be no reason now for concealing the fact, that both Austria and Russia favoured this proposal. The enthusiastic temperament of the Emperor Alexander was fast hurrying him into an ill-assorted alliance with the ultra-liberal party in France,—to conciliate whom he was willing to overstep at times the line of prudence; while Austria, looking at matters from an opposite point of view, was willing to risk much in order to enhance the king's popularity. Even Lord Liverpool seems to have been disposed to yield the point; at all events he encouraged the Duc de Richelieu in bringing his proposal under the consideration of the Council of Ministers. These very properly referred the matter to the Commander-in-Chief of the allied army, and the Duke dealt with it, as he would have done with any other, in which military, not less than political considerations were mixed up. He wrote an elaborate paper, pointing out that France had no right to complain as a nation, nor the government of France as a government, of existing

arrangements ; that these had been adopted in preference to a scheme of partition, of which most of the allies were at one time in favour ; that they had in view the support of the royal authority in France, quite as much as the averting from Europe the calamities of war, and that any modification which should render them less efficient than they were for the two latter purposes, could only be productive of mischief. The French court applied to be relieved of a part of the army, because, through the failure of the crops, the difficulty in finding pay and subsistence for the men and horses would be enhanced. It was the Duke's opinion, that for this very reason the allies ought not to diminish the strength of their forces in France. These forces were not too strong in their integrity to compel the fulfilment of treaties should an attempt be made to evade them. If 20,000 or 30,000 men were withdrawn, the residue would be too weak to put down resistance, should resistance be offered to the getting in of supplies; and Europe must again be called to arms, in order to relieve its own army from a state of blockade. Besides, nobody could as yet tell how the new parliament would work. His Grace, therefore, recommended that the appeal of the king and the Duc de Richelieu should be resisted.

Unwilling as he was to incur the risk of a premature reduction in the army of occupation, the Duke was well disposed to afford to France all the relief which, under existing circumstances, could safely be given. With this view he suggested that the army, which was now a little above its former strength, should be reduced to 150,000 men; that the 4000 or 5000 officers who had heretofore been reckoned apart from

the rank and file, should be included in this specified number; and that a good many followers and servants, of whom there was an excess in every cantonment, should be got rid of. He calculated that by these means a saving might be effected of 25,000 daily rations, equal to 10,000,000 of francs per annum; and that a still further reduction of expense could be brought about by marching from France the corps whose term of foreign service might be complete before the troops appointed to relieve them should enter the country, and omitting to fill up such casualties as might occur from deaths or desertion. The ministers of the allied powers could not gainsay the soundness of his Grace's reasoning; and the application to withdraw a third of the army, which the French government had put forward, was declined.

There is no reason to believe that the Duke expressed any desire that his opinions on this head, or the weight which they carried with them, should be concealed. But it would have been contrary to nature had the part which he took in the discussion failed, when it got abroad, to give umbrage to the French government and people. The former bore him a grudge already, for this among other reasons, that he deprecated measures of severity, towards what were called the Regicides; a class of persons whom the princes were anxious to persecute, but of whom he always spoke, and spoke truly, as of men, some very poor, some very rich, and all old and harmless. Perhaps, too, he made himself disagreeable, if not to the government, certainly to some of its supporters, by the earnestness with which he pressed for the revocation of passports, which had been granted by the Minister

of Police to certain refugees, and fixed at the same time their residence in the Low Countries. It is not, indeed, very easy to understand why this application should have been either evaded or censured, for the refugees in question were by no means inoffensive exiles for conscience' sake. On the contrary, they abused the hospitality which was afforded them, by plotting for the overthrow of the existing state of things in Europe, and by getting up a newspaper, which they filled with acrimonious attacks, not upon governments only, but upon individuals. Nor were the refugees content with this. They hired and furnished a theatre, in which night after night pieces were performed, of a highly immoral as well as seditious tendency; and when they conceived that a sufficient impression had been made in the capital, they sent out their company into the provinces, with instructions to indoctrinate the Belgian people in every town and village where a public room could be procured.

When these libels first appeared, the Duke, as well as others who were the subjects of them, blamed the King of the Netherlands, because he adopted no measures either to suppress the obnoxious newspaper, or to expel the libellers from his dominions. A journey to the Hague, however, which his Grace undertook in the early part of 1816, satisfied him that his majesty was less in fault than had been supposed. The obnoxious paper was supported by persons well known to the French police, who had established themselves in Brussels, because their passports required them to do so; and whom the Belgian government felt itself bound to protect so long as they retained these passports, and committed no offence against the laws of the land. Neither was it

possible for his majesty, at his own pleasure, to suppress or otherwise interfere with their newspaper; because freedom of the press having been guaranteed to Belgium by the constitution, no publication could be proceeded against except on the prosecution of the parties libelled. Under these circumstances the only course open to his Grace, was to represent to the Duc de Richelieu the extent of mischief which the refugees were working; and to suggest the propriety of either cancelling their passports, or of directing them to take up their abode in some place farther removed than Brussels from the French frontier.

Much more was made in 1816 than is made now of libels upon governments, and even upon individuals. There was a greater proneness likewise to believe in conspiracies, and to exaggerate the power of conspirators for evil. Still the fact remains beyond dispute, that at the period of which we are writing, Brussels had become the centre of a great plot, and that the parties to it aimed at nothing less than the accomplishment, by every means, of a revolution in France, if not in other countries. Among the active agents of that plot were the Count Victor de Cruquenbourg, a Belgian noble, whose brother was aide-de-camp to the Prince of Orange; M. Gueyet and his wife; MM. Nicole, Martinet, Couchons de Maine, Briesse, and one or two more, who met habitually, in the salons of Madame Regnault and of other ladies, with whom the prince was on habits of intimacy. With these, though in a subordinate capacity, Cantillon, doomed by and by to an unenviable notoriety, was connected. No evidence exists to prove that they maintained with the Prince of Orange any intimate or even personal re-

lations. His royal highness made, indeed, no secret of his disinclination to interfere with them, and expressed a general approval of the views which they took of certain great political questions; but an eccentric English nobleman, then residing in Brussels, went much farther. Lord K—— received them at his table, supplied them with funds, and professed to make with them common cause; and by and by, when the shell exploded, admitted such of them as took refuge in London into his family circle. But the most remarkable feature in the case was perhaps the supineness with which the government of Louis XVIII. seemed to be affected. Though aware of all that was going on, and of much that was intended, M. Richelieu took no steps to abate the nuisance, beyond transmitting to the French minister in Brussels a few mild expostulations, which neither had, nor as it appeared were intended to have, the slightest effect upon the king's advisers. Now the views of the Duke of Wellington with regard to such matters were at that time settled enough. He was tolerant up to a certain point of controversy in print, whether the subject discussed related to politics, to morals, or even to religion; but for attacks upon private character, not less than for what he regarded as incitements to sedition, he had no patience; and he never took the trouble to conceal or even to disguise his sentiments.* Yet he

* A curious because characteristic specimen of the Duke's style of correspondence with newspaper editors, occurs in the last volume of the Gurwood Despatches. It is dated Paris, 23rd November, 1815, and begins thus: "Sir,—My name is frequently mentioned in your newspaper, and as it is a sort of privilege of modern Englishmen to read in the daily newspapers, lies, respecting those who serve them, and I have been so long accustomed to be so treated, I should not have thought it necessary to trouble you on the subject," &c.

can scarcely be said to have entertained opinions behind those of the age of which we are speaking. The newspaper press was not then what it is now, either here or elsewhere. Aiming habitually at a more restricted freedom of discussion, and perhaps conducted with a smaller amount both of ability and of knowledge, it exercised in England much less influence than it does now; while on the Continent it rarely spoke, except as the head of the police might direct. When therefore there appeared a journal, which, mourning continually over the departed glories of France, denounced by name the leading men of the day; and when the government, neither of the country in which it was published nor of the nation which it incited to revolt, interfered to put it down, the inference came naturally enough to be drawn, that the principles inculcated in its columns must have their admirers in high places, and that the work of revolution, when fairly attempted, would prove much less arduous than was generally imagined. . The moral influence of a newspaper conducted under such circumstances could not fail to be immense. It set all established conventionalities aside. It held its own course, either through the good will, or the fears of those whom it assailed. It was read, commented on, and applauded for its boldness in all circles, and became, so to speak, a sort of substantive power in Europe. The Duke did not hesitate to point out to all concerned the consequences which might be expected to result from indifference to these proceedings; but his warnings were little regarded, and the poison continued to diffuse itself through a perpetually widening circle.

One of the great, though doubtless involuntary pro-

moters of the revolutionary spirit at this time, was the Emperor Alexander of Russia. Raised to the throne under very appalling circumstances, and married to an amiable princess with whose tastes his own could never agree, he fell, as years grew upon him, into a morbid state of mind; which sought indulgence in devising schemes, beautiful in theory, but quite impracticable, for the moral regeneration of mankind. It was in one of these dreams that his project of the Holy Alliance originated, which though long misunderstood, is now known to have been as harmless as it was impossible. It aimed at connecting the princes of Europe in a chain of brotherhood; binding them all to govern their respective countries upon the pure principles of Christianity, and inviting them to acknowledge one common head, Jesus Christ, in whose name they should engage to act towards their subjects, not as sovereigns, but as fathers. His, too, was the idea, that the affairs of the world might be managed by meetings at certain fixed intervals of the crowned heads of Europe, or their representatives; while to the peoples as much of liberty was given as should be compatible with the maintenance of order, and the due authority of a patriarchal sway. To him the policy of the ultra-royalists in France was, as might be expected, extremely obnoxious; and in opposition to them he threw the weight of his influence, now into the scale of the king's party, now into that of the ultra-liberals. The modifications which had recently taken place in the French cabinet were effected with his hearty concurrence. He approved likewise of the *coup d'état;* and after it had been accomplished he contributed to bring General St. Cyr and M. de Molé into the king's confidence. In like manner he

indoctrinated his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, with opinions, for which, to say the least of it, Continental Europe was not then ripe. He became, in short, though the most absolute sovereign in Christendom, the centre towards which all the discontented spirits of the age gravitated. That he obeyed, in all this, mere fancies, the idle dreams of a mind diseased — the progress of events not long afterwards made manifest; for when Italy heaved to shake off the yoke of the stranger, and Spain endeavoured to effect her own freedom, no sovereign on the Continent was more prompt than he to put them down. But in 1815, 1816, and 1817, his views ran all in an opposite direction, and he proved in consequence quite as troublesome to the friends of rational liberty, through his eagerness to precipitate change, as by and by he offended them by the strong measures which he adopted to repress it.

Meanwhile in France itself affairs went on, if not smoothly, in all respects more steadily than might have been expected. The new parliament proved as willing as the old to help the country out of its difficulties. The administration, liberalised by a few changes in its *personnel* took better, or appeared to do so, with the people; and the Allies contributed their part towards the establishment of order, by dealing tenderly with France in its financial operations. Time was granted, on the application of M. Richelieu, in order that measures might be adopted to negociate a loan; and Messrs. Hope and Baring were prevailed upon by the Duke of Wellington to afford assistance in the arrangement of that matter. Moreover, when a second application was made to reduce the strength of the army of occupation, the Duke withdrew his opposition

to the proceeding. He had resisted it in 1816, because the provinces were then disturbed, because the Chambers were unmanageable, and the harvest had been defective. None of these causes operated now, at least to the same extent; and though he could not hide from himself the risk which must be incurred, he was willing to face it, rather than oppose his own views any longer to those of the allied courts. The result was, that in April, 1817, 30,000 men of the allied armies marched out of France; and that France experienced in consequence a very considerable diminution of the burthen to which the treaty of 1815 had subjected her.

But France was not, therefore, propitiated, especially towards the Duke; neither were the parties which divided her influences among them brought more into accord with one another. On the contrary, his Grace became the subject of increasing obloquy, because he had not sooner consented to a measure which would not have been adopted at all had he persisted in opposing it: while the ultra-royalists, now in opposition, gained an immense accession of strength through the imprudence, to call it by no stronger term, of the government. M. Talleyrand indulged one evening, at the house of the English ambassador, in criticisms more witty than they were cautious, on the proceedings of some of his colleagues. His words were repeated to the king, and his name being struck out of the list of ministers, he went over, with all the ultra-liberals whom he could carry with him, to the ranks of the opposition.

It was at this juncture that secret overtures were made to the court of St. Petersburg to withdraw from

France the army of occupation altogether. This step was in strict accord with that system of special dealing which Russia was now labouring to establish; and which induced her on every possible occasion to hold as far aloof as might be from the joint proceedings of the other ministers. The overtures led to nothing, as perhaps both parties expected; but care was taken to render the French people aware that the Emperor Alexander had been quite ready to trust them; and that it was owing to the obstinacy of the other powers, and especially of England, that they were not at once delivered from the presence of the foreigners. There followed upon this, both in Paris and throughout the provinces, increased irritation; and quarrels between the country people and the allied soldiers became more frequent. But the Duke did not relax in the execution of his duty. When his own people were in fault he punished them severely; when the French were shown to be the aggressors, he insisted upon proper reparation being made. Every conceivable impediment was, indeed, thrown in the way of the attainment of the latter object; yet in most instances he overcame them. He succeeded, likewise, at last, in obtaining the arrest of Count Cruquenbourg and his confederates, upon whom were found papers confirmatory of the worst suspicions which had been entertained concerning them. A short imprisonment was, however, the extent of the penalty which the courts of law in Brussels awarded to them; and their friends, still at large, became, in consequence, more daring than ever.

In April of this year the Duke again visited England. He had much to say to Lord Liverpool and the members of the administration, and much to hear from

them. Russia was playing a game of her own both with France and Spain. France was manifestly aiming at a re-establishment of the family compact; which the marriage of the Duke de Berry with a princess of Naples seemed to have suggested to her. The former power had offered to France a strict alliance; and proposed to assist Spain in the reduction of her South American colonies, provided a naval station were made over to her in Minorca: the latter was urgent for the admission of Spain into the congress, and advocated her claims to certain Italian duchies in opposition to those of Austria. These, with other questions of scarcely less moment, were discussed in all their bearings; and the results were more and more to impress the king's ministers with admiration of the clear views and sound judgment of their adviser. But the time was not yet come for inviting him to enter the cabinet. The army was still in France; and so long as it remained there, his presence to command it, and to support the able minister who represented England at the court of the Tuilleries, was indispensable. He, therefore, after a brief sojourn in London, repaired again to his post; and affairs went on pretty much as they had done for some months past.

We have told, by anticipation, how the question of claims was dealt with, and how, at last, the Duke, on the direct entreaty of the Emperor Alexander, took them up and settled them. We have more than once alluded to the forbearance which was exercised by the Allies in not pressing for prompt payment from France, when payment would have involved the king's ministers in difficulties. Strange to say, none of these acts seems to have been appreciated by the French govern-

ment; while the French people only became, from day to day, more eager to get rid of the foreigner at all hazards. A French and Russian intrigue to effect this object had been resisted in July. In August a proclamation was posted upon the walls of Dunkirk, and largely circulated through France, calling upon the people to rise and rid themselves at once of the army of occupation and of the Bourbons. A copy of this proclamation having been sent to the Duke, he inclosed it, as a matter of course, to Sir Charles Stuart; but wrote, at the same time, to recommend that no public notice should be taken of it. "I don't purpose," he added, "as recommended by Clancarty, to make any personal communication of this paper to the principal officers of the army of occupation, as it appears very unnecessary to create what I think a groundless alarm. We are all sufficiently on our guard — not against assassination certainly, and I don't see how we could be so — but against surprise. A few straggling officers or soldiers might be murdered in their cantonments in the winter, certainly; but nothing could prevent our collecting, if necessary; and then, I confess, I don't see what could injure any of us."

Besides these considerations more immediately bearing upon the treaty of 1815, and the best means of carrying it into effect, many questions were at this time submitted to the Council of Ministers, on all of which they solicited and obtained the benefit of the Duke's advice. Between Spain and Portugal, for example, serious differences had arisen, which the latter, at least, was desirous of having settled by arbitration. Spain claimed from Portugal the surrender of the province of Olivenza, which had been assigned

as dower to a princess of the house of Braganza, on her marriage with Ferdinand VII. But the princess was dead, the province had never been given over, and Portugal, contending that the political changes occasioned by the late war had annulled the contract, refused to alienate any portion of her territory in Europe, and appealed to England for support. Meanwhile, Portugal, in order, as she said, to protect herself against the revolutionary spirit which agitated the Spanish colonies, had marched an army across the River Plata, and taken possession of Monte Video. It would little interest the reader to be told how the points at issue between the Peninsular nations were argued, or with what pertinacity both, but especially Spain, stood upon her dignity before she could be brought to argue them at all. For three long years the discussion lasted; and it might have been continued three years more, had not the Duke been prevailed upon to arbitrate between the contending parties.

Again, Spain was at variance with Austria, on the subject of her right to recover for the infanta and her son the Italian principalities of Parma, Placentia, and Guatiala. For a hundred years and more these states had been governed by a younger branch of the Spanish Bourbons, from whom, in 1814, they were alienated, in order to create a sovereignty for the Empress Maria Louisa. But the return of Napoleon from Elba, and the war consequent on that event, had overridden the treaty of Paris; and Spain now demanded that the wife of the ex-emperor should be expelled, and the principalities restored to their rightful sovereign. The question was in every point of view a delicate one, for Austria exhibited as little inclination to disinherit one

of her own princesses as Spain was unwilling to abandon the rights of the infanta. At last the Duke suggested that both should submit to a compromise;—that the empress should be permitted to retain the principalities for her life, and that they should revert on her demise to the infanta and her son. After a good deal of discussion in Paris, this question, like the matter in dispute between Spain and Portugal, was referred to the coming congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, which ultimately adopted the Duke's suggestion, and so the difficulty was surmounted.

And here, perhaps, it may be necessary to observe, that as the earliest period fixed for the military occupation of France drew near, the French government became more and more earnest with the Allies to withdraw their troops from the country. In this she was supported by Russia, who suggested the propriety of a congress, and expressed herself desirous of admitting to it, on equal terms, the representatives, not of France only, but also of Spain and of other European states. But the policy of Russia was not at that moment very favourably regarded by England, and Austria and Prussia both suspected it. While, therefore, the project of a congress was entertained, the three powers declined to meet the representatives of any states, except such as had been direct parties to the treaty of 1815; and refused to concede to France any voice in determining how far the terms of her capitulation were to be modified. The fact is, that Russia was anxious to settle at the coming congress the affairs of Europe generally on the principles of the Holy Alliance; whereas England was determined that the only question for debate should be, whether then or at some subsequent

period the military occupation of France should cease. Both parties, when they came together, found it necessary to make mutual concessions. But the policy of England so far prevailed, that when the congress met it represented only Austria, England, Prussia, and Russia, and that whatever questions came before it additional to that for the settlement of which it had been convened, were treated as supplementary questions, and received comparatively little attention.

It was while these matters were under discussion that the conspiracy which had so long fermented in Europe boiled over, and that an attempt was made to assassinate the Duke, which, but for the merest apparent accident, would have probably succeeded. His Grace was in Paris, occupying, as on such occasions he always did, a house in the Rue Champs Élysées. It was the same from which, in 1848, Le Grange fired the pistol shot upon the troops which brought about the revolution of that year, and which Napoleon III. afterwards pulled down, along with many others, in order to make way for his improvements. The entrance to the house in question was under a covered passage, the gate of which stood square towards the street, and presented thereby a somewhat awkward approach, except to a skilful driver. On the 11th of February, 1818, his Grace dined with Sir Charles Stuart. He retired from the party about half-past one o'clock, and drove straight home. The night was dark, and the streets of Paris were not lighted then as they are now with gas; but a lamp which hung in the courtyard of the Duke's house sufficed to render objects under the gateway visible. In turning the sharp corner formed by the wall, the Duke's coachman ran the wheel of the carriage

against a low pillar which flanked the gate, and the Duke, who had been sitting upright in his carriage, was in consequence thrown back. Just at that instant a pistol was fired, the ball from which passed through both windows, and the Duke saw the man who had discharged it turn and run away. Before the horses could be stopped and a pursuit undertaken, the man had disappeared in the darkness, though not till both the Duke and the servants who stood behind the carriage found time to notice his general appearance, and to impress it upon their memory.

Not a moment was lost in communicating the circumstances to the police, and means were taken to trace out the culprit. It was already known that a knot of suspected persons had arrived a few days previously from Brussels. Among them was Cantillon, formerly a non-commissioned officer in the imperial army, and the same of whom the Count Cruquenbourg and his associates were understood to have made a tool. The police proceeded at once to this man's lodgings, and he was arrested the same night with a pistol in his possession which had recently been discharged. Being confronted with the Duke's servant, the latter immediately declared that Cantillon was the individual whom he saw running away from the carriage after the shot had been fired, and Cantillon was in consequence committed for trial. And there was probably no reasonable person who entertained a doubt that the charge of attempted assassination would be brought home to him.

It was felt, however, that to convict an obscure individual such as he of so great a crime, and to rest satisfied with his conviction, would be like breaking a

fly upon a wheel. The belief universally prevailed that Cantillon could not have obeyed the impulses of a blind political fanaticism. He was believed to be but the agent of that band of conspirators who for months back had been inculcating the doctrine of assassination through their newspapers and in their theatrical performances; and the French government being appealed to, affected the utmost anxiety to sift the matter to the bottom. The Duke was assured that a peremptory demand should be made upon the government of the Netherlands to act with vigour. But the French minister, by what motive influenced it is not our business to inquire, proved to have been more liberal with promises than with their performance. He sent no peremptory instructions to his representative at the Netherlands court. He merely directed him to communicate with the minister of police at Brussels, and to draw his attention mildly to the inconveniences to which Europe was subjected by the conduct of persons who harboured there. Now the Netherlands being a free state, and its inhabitants living under a constitutional government, its police was, like the police of all free countries, comparatively weak; and the minister could only give an assurance that the laws should be put in force if any one would make an appeal to them. The truth is, that France had not yet learned to look otherwise than grudgingly upon the union of Belgium with Holland. She felt that the new state had been erected as a sort of barrier against herself, and was well disposed to bring it, as far as she could, into discredit with the rest of Europe. Hence her tone of moderation in communicating with the Netherlands government, while elsewhere she spoke indignantly of the asylum

afforded by the nation to conspirators, and of the licentiousness of the national press. And for a while she carried her point. Austria and Prussia had long complained of the same thing, and now expressed themselves warmly upon the subject. Prussia, indeed, seemed at one time disposed to go further; for, in consequence of some infraction of her customs' laws, she addressed a threatening note to the Netherlands minister, by whom it was shown, in great alarm, to Lord Clancarty, and by him to the Duke of Wellington.

It was characteristic of the Duke that, though little disposed to do battle for the Belgian or any other press, he condemned the tone which the more powerful of the Continental states now held towards their weaker neighbour. He heartily joined Lord Clancarty, therefore, in protesting against the implied threat to which the Netherlands had been subjected by Prussia; and he no sooner learned how the negotiation respecting the surrender of the conspirators had been conducted, than, to use one of his own expressions, he "put the saddle on the right horse." We do not pretend to account for the turn which this affair, disgraceful from first to last, eventually took; but of the facts themselves there can be no doubt. The Netherlands, a feeble though a free state, waited only for the appearance of pressure from without, to hand over the whole body of conspirators to justice. No pressure being applied, she was hindered by the spirit of her constitution from volunteering their arrest. They took the alarm, and, like prudent persons, fled most of them to England. The trial of Cantillon was then hurried on, and, in the teeth of such evidence as would have secured a conviction in London, or anywhere else, a Parisian jury acquitted him. One

step more in the downward course of degradation remained to be taken—and taken it was in due time. By a codicil to his will executed at St. Helena, Napoleon I. left to this Cantillon à legacy of 10,000 francs, in acknowledgment of the service which he had endeavoured to render to France, by shooting at the Duke of Wellington; and Napoleon III., a quarter of a century afterwards, caused the representatives of the assassin to be looked up in Brussels, that he might hand over to them the wages of Cantillon's infamy with all the interest thereon accruing.

There was, however, one person whom these proceedings overwhelmed with grief and shame. The Prince of Orange bitterly regretted even the indirect countenance which he had given to these bad men; and his remorse, as sincere as it was undisguised, produced an excellent effect both upon his own individual nature and upon the internal policy of his country. He wrote to the Duke, entreating his Grace to believe that he neither was nor ever could have been a party to such atrocious proceedings. He proposed also to visit the Duke at Cambrai, not concealing his motive, viz., that he might thereby place himself right before Europe; which seeing him the honoured guest of his old chief, would acquit him of all participation in the plot of which Cantillon had been the executioner. The Duke, with his habitual generosity, scouted the idea that any manœuvring was necessary, and begging his Royal Highness to set his mind at ease, promised, instead of receiving him at Cambrai, to visit him at Zoestdyke. It does not appear that his Grace ever found time to fulfil that promise, but the Prince entered with him once more into the familiar and kindly relations of other

days, and became at the same time reconciled to his own father, between whom and himself there had been, for some months back, considerable alienation.

Little more remains to be told of the Duke's proceedings as a military commander. He resumed his duties at Cambrai, as soon as the business which took him to Paris was completed; and when in September following the representatives of the great powers met at Aix-la-chapelle, he joined them there. Of some of the services which he rendered on that occasion, to them and to Europe, we have already spoken. But the point for the settlement of which his judgment was mainly relied upon, was that in which France had a very deep interest. He was officially requested to state in writing whether the army of occupation might, in his opinion, without danger to France herself and to the peace of Europe, be withdrawn; and he decided that it might. One word from him, adverse to this view of the case, would have saddled France, for two years more, with the burden of maintaining from the produce of her own soil 120,000 foreign troops. But he conscientiously believed that the government of Louis XVIII. was by this time strong enough to stand alone; and that France, weaned to a great extent from her love of conquest, would leave Europe unmolested. So believing, he could not give any other advice, than that the great powers should, with as little delay as possible, recall their respective contingents.

And here, in passing, we may be permitted to remark upon the spirit of perfect disinterestedness and good faith by which the Duke was animated throughout the whole of this transaction. As general-in-chief of the armies of Europe, he may be said to have held the balance of

power in his own hands. His pay and emoluments were very large; indeed, his position was altogether such as to fill up the utmost measure of human ambition; yet he showed himself not only ready but desirous of foregoing all these personal advantages, as soon as his sober judgment told him that his work was done. Far be it from us to swell the cry with which it has become too common of late to assail the memory of another English commander, second in military reputation only to the Duke. We put no trust whatever in the scandalous stories which describe Marlborough as prolonging the war of the Spanish Succession, in order to enrich himself. But we may be permitted to doubt whether he, or perhaps any other man, circumstanced as the Duke of Wellington then was, except the Duke himself, would have voluntarily laid down a high and lucrative command, which he might have retained without being exposed to the risk of shedding one drop of blood; and his retention of which for at least two years longer, as it had been provided for by the treaty of Paris, so it was believed by many competent judges to be necessary for the peace of the world.

In dwelling thus at length on what may be called the political career of the Duke during the important interval between 1815 and 1818, it must not be supposed that we underestimate the responsibilities which devolved upon him as commander-in-chief of the allied army. These, on the contrary, were incessant; but affecting, as they did, matters principally of detail, they scarcely admit of description, except in very general terms. It was his duty, and he discharged it, to receive and examine daily statements of the condition of his army in regard to its discipline and general

efficiency. He superintended its accounts, he saw that supplies were regularly furnished to it, he looked into the state of its hospitals, and kept it ready to take the field at a moment's notice. He personally inspected, at uncertain seasons, the various corps and divisions of which it was composed, and concentrated them, sometimes in greater sometimes in lesser numbers, for reviews and manœuvres. Into all grounds of difference between them and the inhabitants he carefully inquired. The discipline which he maintained was unbending, and the justice of his awards was never called in question, whether they settled disputes between individuals or dealt with questions affecting whole communities. With all this there was mixed up the same desire to promote amusement and rational gaiety which had been characteristic of him throughout the whole of the Peninsular war. He kept his fox-hounds and hunted them regularly; he encouraged his officers to join in the sports of the field, provided they obtained the sanction of the proprietors of the soil, but not otherwise; he often patronised the theatrical performances of the amateurs, who exhibited their histrionic powers in Cambrai and Valenciennes, and rarely sat down to a table round which numerous guests were not gathered. For of all the mistakes into which his biographers have fallen, that is the greatest which describes him as having been at any period of his career morose or saturnine. There never lived a man, conversant with grave affairs, more exuberantly joyous by nature than the Duke of Wellington. He told a story admirably, he enjoyed a witty tale and dialogue beyond measure, and was not averse to a practical joke, provided it were a harmless one. As an instance of the extent to which the spirit of

quizzing was sometimes carried in his household, the following anecdote may be put on record:—

The childish vanity of Sir Sidney Smith, the hero of Acre, had at that time passed into a proverb, and some of the Duke's aides-de-camp determined to play upon it. A letter was, accordingly, written in hieroglyphics, with a French translation annexed, and addressed to the admiral, as if from the Sublime Porte, informing him that his imperial highness had been pleased to confer upon him the Order of the Key; and the key of a door having been carefully wrapped up, with an appropriate ribbon attached, it was inclosed in a box and sent to Sir Sidney's lodgings. The key happened to be a very rusty one, and the circumstance was accounted for in the letter, which stated that the box had unfortunately got wet with sea water in its passage from Constantinople.

The gallant admiral received the present, as it was anticipated that he would; and being desirous of obtaining some other authority than his own for wearing the order, he proceeded to the Duke's house and asked his advice. The Duke saw at once into the whole matter; and a sore trial it was, to a man endowed with a keen sense of the ridiculous, to keep his gravity. But he put a restraint upon his feelings, and, pretending to be exceedingly angry, advised Sir Sidney not to wear the key. He was convulsed with laughter when he met the culprits at dinner, and often told the story afterwards with admirable humour.

Nor was it exclusively with his personal staff, or among his more intimate acquaintances in civil and military life, that the Duke gave free vent to his exuberance of spirits. At the meetings of ministers in

Paris and at Aix-la-Chapelle he was the gayest of the gay, insomuch that from Metternich and others he acquired the sobriquet of the "glorious boy." And yet the Duke was far from possessing a temper naturally placid or even gentle. No man could bear contradiction better when great issues were at stake. He would listen with marvellous patience to reasonings which he felt to be extravagant, provided they came from any one whose position or knowledge entitled him to hold and maintain opinions at all; but petty crosses, and acts of disobedience to orders, irritated him beyond measure. Entirely as the officers of his staff felt at their ease when receiving his instructions, and conducting the details of business, it was always a service of danger to approach him if some blunder were to be accounted for, or a breach of discipline to be reported; and it is fair to add that this remarkable admixture of irritability with playfulness adhered to him to the last. The members of his family used to speak of these explosions as letting off the steam. Yet they all bore them with equanimity; for a burst of anger, especially if it happened to be a little unreasonable, was invariably succeeded by a greater amount than usual of urbanity and kindness. And so it was beyond his own immediate household. To the outer world he often appeared to be unforgiving and obstinate; those who knew him intimately were aware that such appearances belied him. For it was one of his maxims that the governing power should take the utmost possible care never to commit a mistake; but, if a mistake were committed, that the governing power should never acknowledge that it had done wrong. On this principle he seems to have acted throughout the whole of his long career; yet the wronged

individual, if he had but patience, was sure in the end to be righted. The Duke might not say, in direct terms, "Forgive me, I gave an erroneous judgment in your case," but the error, if it proved to be one, sooner or later made itself felt, and he sought, and always found an opportunity of showing that it had been involuntary. We state this, not as pretending either to justify or condemn the practice, but as a fact illustrative of one of those peculiarities which usually appertain to strongly marked characters, and which are perhaps inseparable from them.

CHAP. III.

THE DUKE CREATED MASTER-GENERAL OF THE ORDNANCE.—STATE OF ENGLAND CONSEQUENT ON THE SUDDEN CESSATION OF WAR.—RISINGS.—THE MANCHESTER COLLISION.—THE DUKE'S INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL BYNG.—THE SIX ACTS.—LETTER TO LORD SIDMOUTH—THE CATO STREET CONSPIRACY.—THE DUKE'S ESCAPE FROM ASSASSINATION.

1818—1820.

HITHERTO the Duke had served his country mainly in the field, as the successful leader of her armies. His military triumphs had indeed imposed upon him the responsibility of giving a tone, in many important particulars, to her relations with foreign states. But except during the brief interval when he held office as Chief Secretary for Ireland, he had enjoyed few opportunities of inquiring into her domestic concerns, or taking any part in the direction or control of them. He was now about to be brought into the intimate counsels of his sovereign, and to assist with his advice and authority in administering the affairs of the empire at large. He was at Aix-la-Chapelle, when in Oct. 1818, he received a letter from Lord Liverpool intimating to him his nomination to the office of Master-General of the Ordnance, with a seat in the cabinet. The Earl of Mulgrave, who, up to that date had held the appointment, resigned it in the handsomest manner; not through any feeling of personal or political estrangement from those with whom he had heretofore acted—for he still retained his place in the cabinet—but in order, to use his own expression,

that the head of the administration might have an opportunity of commanding, at all times, the advice of one whose judgment, especially upon military questions, would be of inestimable value. Lord Liverpool, in writing to the Duke, took care to state all this, while at the same time he explained that the Prince Regent, equally with himself, waited anxiously for his Grace's reply, and hoped that it would be favourable.

Such an intimation, conveyed in terms so flattering, had with the Duke of Wellington the force of a command. He felt and always avowed himself to be the servant of the crown. He was prepared to undertake any office, and to discharge any range of duties, which the sovereign might be pleased to impose upon him. In this spirit he had accepted the French embassy of 1814, and was ready to lay it down again, and to go out in command of the troops destined for America, when the idea of so employing him was momentarily entertained. Happily for England and for Europe, that project dropped of its own accord; and the foremost military genius of the age, instead of wasting its energies in bushfights with undisciplined militia, was reserved to gather its crowning laurels on the field of Waterloo. The same high sense of duty, not any impulse of personal ambition or craving after place, induced him now to close unhesitatingly with Lord Liverpool's proposal. Waiting therefore only till the different corps of the army could be put in motion, and taking leave of them one by one in valedictory orders of the day, he passed over to England, where he was immediately sworn in, and took his seat as a member of the administration of which the Earl of Liverpool was at the head.

The Duke began what may be called his political

career at an anxious and even a critical period in English history. So sudden a change as had occurred from a state of chronic war to one of peace, could not fail to operate disastrously on all the great interests of the country. It was felt first by the ship-owners, who, after long enjoying a monopoly of the carrying trade of the world, saw a formidable competition entered into against them by the mercantile marine of every commercial state in both hemispheres. The blow fell next upon the owners and occupiers of land, the price of whose corn and cattle sank, all at once, to little more than one-half of what they had been accustomed to receive throughout well-nigh a quarter of a century. The growers of colonial produce sustained a similar and perhaps a heavier mortification; for having persuaded themselves that the continental nations were famishing for their sugars and coffees, they glutted every market with commodities which no one cared to purchase. Nor were the manufacturers of cotton, woollen, and other stuffs in a better predicament. They poured their fabrics into districts, the inhabitants of which were too much impoverished by the ravages of war to deal with them; and then, after cramming their own warehouses with the cargoes thrown back upon their hands, they shut up their mills, and their workmen ceased to be employed. There followed upon this an enormous increase of poor rates, with idleness and poverty in all quarters; of which there were not wanting demagogues to take advantage; and of which the results were, a state of bitter hostility between classes, and universal discontent among the working-people with their employers and with the Government.

The moral hurricane which swept over England

between 1814 and 1818 seemed, when the Duke took his seat in the cabinet, to have in some measure expended its violence. The passing of the Corn Bill at the former of these periods, had inspired the agriculturists with hope, and kept the great body of the tenant farmers loyal. The repeal of the income-tax in 1816, and the continuance of prohibitory duties on articles of foreign manufacture, were accepted by British manufacturers and artisans as a great boon. Both sections of the community appear, indeed, to have since discovered that the measures for which they then clamoured, were mistakes; and corn laws have in consequence been got rid of, and free trade established through the instrumentality of a renewed income-tax. Still the mind of the nation was by no means settled. Further reductions in the army, in the navy, and in all the public establishments were demanded. The demand was acceded to, and crowds of soldiers and sailors, and workmen from the arsenals and dockyards, coming upon the labour market, already overstocked, served but to aggravate the general distress. The mob rose in Spa Fields in 1816, broke into the gunsmiths' shops, and fired upon the magistrates of London. In 1817 a more extensive conspiracy was discovered, and the Prince Regent was hooted and stoned as he returned from opening the session of Parliament. Then followed the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—an insurrection at Derby, which was put down—the arrest of many persons in different parts of the country, and the execution of a few, taken with arms in their hands. Owing partly to these vigorous proceedings, but much more to a general improvement in trade and commerce, the latter months of 1817, and the whole of

1818, proved to be seasons of comparative repose. The Act suspending the law of Habeas Corpus was permitted to expire, and ministers and people equally flattered themselves, that the dawn of that plenty, which is associated in men's minds with the idea of peace, was at length beginning to appear.

We are not called upon on the present occasion to discuss the merits of that famous bill which re-established cash payments in England, and put a stop to the system of unlimited credit, on which the trade and commerce of the country had for long years been conducted. We should be sorry to be understood as attributing to that or to any specific law, events, to the production of which many causes contributed; but there can be no doubt of the fact that the tide, which in 1817 seemed to be setting strong in favour of England's prosperity, suddenly turned; and that the evils from which she appeared to have just escaped, came back upon her with redoubled violence. Country bankers, prohibited from circulating their own paper, could no longer afford to farmers and traders the accommodation to which they were accustomed. Many retired from business altogether, and not a few became bankrupt; while the price of corn, and indeed of every other article of consumption, fell far below the average of former years. Now there was, comparatively speaking, no foreign market at that time for British manufactures, and the closing of the home market, consequent upon such a state of things, paralysed the industry of the nation. Once more the mills stopped, and operatives and agricultural labourers, thrown out of employ, had no other resource than their parishes. The political agitation which had ceased for a while thereupon revived, and

took a far more formidable aspect than it had ever previously borne. Men met by hundreds and by thousands on moors and in desolate places, to drill under cover of night; secret associations were entered into, which bound themselves together by oaths of the most truculent kind; and agitators went about from one great town to another, inflaming the passions of the people, and instigating them to acts of violence. Conspicuous among these was Henry Hunt, originally a blacking-maker in Holborn, whose eloquence, though not of the most refined order, was highly relished by the mob; and who embraced every opportunity of propagating the opinions of those who now, for the first time, began to call themselves "radical reformers."

With the spirit of discontent, which more or less prevailed in all quarters, the great manufacturing towns were especially imbued. A complete breach had, indeed, long separated, in them, the employers from the employed; and now mills were burned down, and machinery broken, under the pretext of forcing the wealthy capitalists to find work for the men. Moreover, now for the first time, the right of these towns to be represented in Parliament began to be asserted; and the mob finding that no attention was paid to them, either by the Government or the Legislature, proceeded to take the law into their own hands. Birmingham set the example by choosing Sir Charles Woolseley, a Worcestershire baronet, to be, what was termed, its legislative attorney; in other words, its representative in the House of Commons. Now this was to tax the patience of the executive rather too much, and warrants were issued against Sir Charles, and a brother demagogue, a dissenting preacher

of the name of Harris. They were arrested, carried before the magistrates, and committed for trial, on the charge of promoting sedition, and conspiring to overturn the King's government.

The temper of the people may be judged of when it is stated that at the very time when Sir Charles Woolseley and Mr. Harris were under examination in the court-house, Birch, the unfortunate constable who had served the warrant upon them, was shot dead in the street. Meanwhile Leeds, Sheffield, Nottingham, and above all, Manchester, caught the infection. A great meeting was called in the latter place for the 9th of August; and when a proclamation by the magistrates pronounced the assembly to be illegal, it was not abandoned, but merely put off till the 16th. The results to which that gathering led are matters of history. There was then a very inadequate military force within the limits of Great Britain. No more than six weak troops of cavalry, portions of two battalions of infantry, with two guns of the horse artillery, could be brought together; and the yeomanry of Cheshire, with a troop raised in Manchester itself, and officered by master manufacturers, was in consequence called out and marched to the scene of action.

The magistrates, as is well known, directed the constables to arrest Mr. Hunt and those who were with him on the platform; and unfortunately for themselves and for all concerned, the Manchester troop was employed to support the civil power. The yeomen were mounted on unbroken horses; and mistaken views of humanity induced them to ride at a walk and in single file into the throng. The mob immediately closed upon each file as it passed, unhorsing some of the men

and rendering all helpless; while yells and shouts rent the air and showers of stones flew in all directions. A cry was raised "Save the Yeomanry!" Two squadrons of the 15th Hussars rode up, and, forming line, charged the mass. It was ascertained at the time, and has never we believe been disputed since, that the soldiers made use as far as possible only of the flats of their swords; but when 60,000 persons are packed together in a narrow space, and all endeavour to escape from what they believe to be an imminent danger, disastrous consequences inevitably follow. Six people were killed upon the spot, and about seventy men, with some women, were trodden down and severely bruised; while of the soldiers two or three fell heavily over heaps of stones, and several were wounded with brick-bats.

Such was the memorable day of Peterloo—an unfortunate affair doubtless, in which the loss of life was grossly exaggerated at the moment, and is still, when occasion serves, alluded to with unnecessary bitterness. The collision occurred in what was then an open space called St. Peter's Field, but which has long since been built over, and cannot now be distinguished from the rest of the city of Manchester. Though regretted by the Government, and open to censure on the score of mismanagement, the conduct of the magistrates received a prompt approval from the Home Secretary; and Mr. Hunt, with his companions, Johnson, Knight, Healey, and Bradford, were committed to Lancaster gaol for trial.

The effect upon the country at large of this proceeding was not good. Most of the higher classes, no doubt, as well those in opposition as the habitual supporters of the administration, rallied round the

Government; though there were not wanting noblemen and gentlemen, some of them of high standing and great personal respectability, who openly took part with the mob, and encouraged them to clamour for the impeachment of the ministers.

Foremost among the impugners of the Lancashire magistrates and of the cabinet was the corporation of London. The address of that body to the Prince Regent was answered by a dignified rebuke, while at the same time Earl Fitzwilliam was removed from the lord-lieutenancy of the West Riding of Yorkshire in consequence of the part which he thought proper to take at a county meeting over which he presided. These were bold measures, but the state of the times required them; for as the long nights drew on, information poured in upon the Home Office that a wide-spread and well-organised plan of revolt was settled, and that it was to issue in a general rising on the 1st of November. Once more, then, the evil effects of a too hasty disbanding of the regular army made itself felt: for the police of the country consisted at that time of a single constable, usually a broken-down tradesman, for each rural parish; while the peace of towns was preserved by a few imbecile watchmen at night, and by the mere force of public opinion by day. Now almost the whole body of the working classes both in town and country were ill-disposed, and numbers of discharged soldiers were among them, first to drill, and afterwards to lead them in rebellion. Under these circumstances the Government determined not only to call out the Yeomanry, but to enrol 10,000 or 12,000 pensioners into veteran battalions; and placing them in garrison in Portsmouth, Plymouth, and elsewhere, to

render available for the field an equal number of effective soldiers.

Each of these arrangements was judicious in itself; but time was necessary to mature them, and the danger pressed. Nor is it easy to conjecture what consequences might have followed had not the Duke been at hand to advise on a point where all readily bowed to his superior judgment. On the 21st of October, Lord Sidmouth was at the Home Office, sorely puzzled how to meet a difficulty against which no adequate preparation had been made, when the Duke entered, and some such conversation as the following ensued:—

Duke.—"Well, what have you done? What orders have you given?"

Lord S.—"I really can't tell. I have written to all the lieutenants of counties to be on the alert, and directed the yeomanry to be ready, and the generals commanding districts are instructed to support the civil power with all the force at their disposal."

Duke.—"Quite right, but have you laid down any specific plan of operations?"

Lord S.—"No, I can't say that I have. I don't see my way to any plan, which shall meet the requirements of an unknown emergency."

Duke.—"Perhaps I may be of some use to you. Shall I write a few memoranda to be sent to Byng?"

The proposal was thankfully acceded to, and the Duke, sitting down to the table, drew up for the guidance of General Sir John Byng, then commanding a military district which embraced the northern counties of England, the subjoined memorandum.

London: Oct. 21st, 1819.

"My dear Byng,—The account which I saw yesterday of the proceedings of the Radicals in different parts of England, tends to prove that we are not far removed from a general and simultaneous rising in various places. It is probable they will first meet in this matter and try their ground, and see how the troops are disposed of, and then proceed to business, which will be neither more nor less than the radical plunder of the rich towns and houses which will fall in their way.

"With the force which we have, it is impossible to prevent the success of this object in every part, and what we must take care of is, that they have no success against any body of troops. As long as no misfortune happens to them, the mischief will be confined to plunder and a little murder, and will not be irretrievable; but it is impossible to foresee how far it will go, if the mob should, in any instance, get the better of the troops. I put out of the question their corrupting the troops, unless they are remarkably changed since I knew them about a twelvemonth ago; and unless the mob should have some success against them.

"I would recommend you, then, in the disposition you will make of your troops, first, to provide for the security of the King's garrisons, castles, and magazines, and secondly, so to dispose of the remainder of your troops, as to provide for the general security and peace of the district. But principally, to be certain that they will be able to join and support each other in case of need; and, above all, to expose no small detachments in a populous town to the danger of being disarmed, insulted, or destroyed. It is much better that a town

should be plundered, and even some lives lost, than that the whole country should be exposed to the danger which would result from the success of the mob against even a small detachment of the troops. Excepting therefore in strongholds, I would recommend you not to detach the infantry in smaller bodies than 200 or 300 men. As for the cavalry, and particularly the Lancers, I would recommend you not to detach them at all from the infantry, and excepting with infantry.

"I would also recommend you, instead of quartering your troops, to put them up in large barns or warehouses; or to construct wooden huts for them, in situations removed from the temptations held out to them in the large towns. I should think you would experience no difficulty in finding situations of this kind on the commons, &c., which must abound in the district which you occupy; and the government will have no objection to allow you every reasonable expense for this object.

"In the existing state of things, I consider 200 or 300 good infantry, with a little cavalry, fully sufficient for any mob of any numbers, and by forming your detachments in this manner, you will always have it in your power to act according to circumstances; either upon many points, to preserve, as far as may be consistent with the safety of the troops, as many towns as possible from plunder, or upon a few or only on one, by the concentration of the troops, if the mob should be more formidable, in your opinion, than I now believe them to be.

"Observe this, that in detaching the troops in this manner, in barns, warehouses, or temporary huts, you must take great care to provide for their having good

fires in the buildings in which you will place them : they will otherwise be wandering about to the public houses &c. in the neighbourhood, and they will moreover become unhealthy.

"I wish to draw your attention to Tynemouth Castle. I have directed that all the forts and batteries at the mouth of the Tyne should be dismantled, excepting Tynemouth Castle, and that all the guns, stores, &c., should be removed into that work. It will be necessary that you should have a small garrison in it.

"P.S. Upon reconsidering the state of the detachments which I have recommended to you to form, it seems to me that each of them will be much strengthened by having a field piece ; I will therefore send down to Weedon ten six-pounders, horsed, with artillerymen attached, to be at your disposal. There will be ammunition in the limbers, but besides that, there will be two ammunition waggons as a reserve, which you will place as you please."

The effect of the application of a really great military mind to an emergency at once so critical and so peculiar, was immediately felt. Moveable columns were formed which, though they consisted of only a few hundred men respectively, kept the whole of the north of England, as well as Scotland, overawed. Meanwhile Parliament met on the 23rd of November, when, after a sharp debate on the speech from the throne, ministers found themselves supported by large majorities in both houses. This was followed by the proposal of measures which were considered necessary for the preservation of the public peace, and which were long known and frequently decried as the "Six Acts." They rendered

military training without authority from the government, illegal, and subjected to fine and imprisonment all persons who should engage in it. They authorised justices of the peace to search for arms, on information upon oath. They permitted the seizure, in undefended cases, of copies of seditious and blasphemous libels. And they prohibited more than fifty persons from assembling in one spot, except at county or borough meetings, regularly called by authority from the magistrate. Of the four Acts here enumerated, only two, the first and the third, were intended to be permanent; the second and fourth were passed for a special purpose, and have long since expired. The remaining two, of which one was proposed by the chancellor in the House of Lords, the other by Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, prevented the traversing or postponing of trials, in cases of misdemeanour, to subsequent assizes: and put some restraint upon newspapers, by subjecting them to stamps, and guarding against their being used for the publication of blasphemous and seditious libels.

It was long the fashion, and we believe that to a certain extent it is so still, to denounce these proceedings as harsh and tyrannical; and to attribute all the evils under which England then suffered to the want of an adequate representation of the people in Parliament, and to the wrong-headedness of their rulers. But no man who has looked impartially into the whole case will give his unqualified assent to these assumptions. The discontent of England from 1815 to 1820 was brought about by causes which no form of popular representation or of government could have averted. It had its root in physical suffering, not in political grievances; in the universal poverty of the working

classes, brought on by the sudden cessation of that demand for their labour, which a war of unexampled continuance and success had created and sustained. There was a cry for a reduction in the fleet and in the army, and for retrenchment in all the establishments connected with both services, by yielding to which too suddenly, and to too large an extent, the evils of which the people complained were merely aggravated. There was a clamour against the pension list, which undoubtedly exhibited many abuses, but the total extinction of which would have produced no perceptible effect upon the state of the nation, or the condition of individuals. Indeed the adoption of the sweeping measure recommended by Cobbett, viz. the passing of a sponge over the record of the national debt, while it would have violated public faith, and brought ruin upon a few thousands of men and women, would have rendered it more and more impossible to provide immediately for those who stood in need of it, a fair day's work for a fair day's wages. What could any government do under such circumstances except repress with a strong hand all attempts to light up civil war within the realm, while at the same time it appealed to Parliament for advice, as to the best and speediest means of reviving the profitable industry of the nation? Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We are not defending each particular law which the cabinet proposed at that time, and the houses of parliament sanctioned. The closing of the ports against foreign corn till corn grown at home had attained to a famine price was a measure of doubtful policy, even as regarded the agricultural interests; while the keeping up of a system of protection to native industry at a period when England

may be said to have been almost the only manufacturing country in Europe, was, to say the least of it, a work of supererogation. Yet, had all the demands of the Reformers been conceded, it is doubtful whether in 1818, any change in these respects would have been effected in the policy of the nation; though there might, and probably would have followed, under a severe pressure from without, the overthrow of the established church, the abolition of an hereditary house of legislature, and the downfall of the throne itself.

It was characteristic of the Duke of Wellington through life, that he never separated himself, either in his public or private correspondence, from the colleagues with whom he acted as a member of the Imperial Government. In the cabinet, as well as from his place in Paris, Verona, or elsewhere, he delivered his own opinions freely; but so long as he considered himself justified in maintaining his political connection with a party, he religiously abstained from hinting, out of doors, at any differences which might have taken place among them. It is impossible therefore to say, how far he approved as an individual, or disapproved, of the general course which was followed at this time. But we have a right to assume that as soon as a measure was determined upon, he applied his best energies to carry it into effect, and there is ample evidence to show that the advice which he gave on such occasions was dictated by the soundest judgment. Writing to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, 11th December, 1819, he says of the first of the four Acts referred to above: "I strongly recommend to you, to order the magistrates to carry into execution, without loss of time, the law against training, and to furnish them with the

means of doing so, (do not let us be again reproached with having omitted to carry the laws into execution,) by sending to Carlisle and Newcastle 700 or 800 men, cavalry and infantry, and two pieces of cannon, or in other words, two of these moveable columns. This force would be more than sufficient to do all that may be required. Rely upon it, that in the circumstances in which we are placed, impression on either side is everything. If upon the passing of the training law you prevent training, either by the use of force or the appearance of force, in the two places above-mentioned, you will put a stop at once to all the proceedings of the insurgents. They are like conquerors, they must go forward; the moment they stop they are lost. Their adherents will lose all confidence, and by degrees every individual will relapse into their old habits of loyalty or indifference. On the other hand, the moment the loyal see there is a law which can prevent these practices, — and means, and inclination, and determination to carry it into execution, they will regain courage, and will do everything which you can desire. In my opinion, if you send the troops and order that the law shall be carried into execution, you will not be under the necessity of using them, — and the good effect of this will be felt, not only in these towns, but over all England. Observe also, that if training is continued after the passing of the law, which it will be unless you send a force to prevent it, the insurgents will gain a very important victory."

So passed the first year of the Duke's life as a domestic politician and a member of a Tory Cabinet. It was one of critical importance to the country, and had to himself much of the interest which attaches to

old associations. Indeed, we have more than once heard him allude to it as reminding him, because of the military arrangements which it became his duty to suggest, of the commencement of his own career as commander-in-chief in Portugal. It was succeeded by a season quite as fruitful in causes of anxiety; though of anxiety originating in a less dignified source, and ending in less satisfactory issues. Death had been busy in the royal family, smiting down in the spring of 1818, the Princess Charlotte and her infant child. In 1820, the Duke of Kent died also, leaving as the sole heir presumptive to the throne, an infant princess, now her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. For the Duke of York was childless, and the Duchess in failing health; while the Duke of Clarence, though more than once presented by his amiable consort with offspring, had not enjoyed the happiness of seeing any of them grow up. This same year, on the 28th of January, died George the Third, after ten years of total seclusion, in a state of physical as well as mental blindness. Whatever of unpopularity might have once attached to that good old man was now forgotten; and the nation mourned for him, lost to them though he had long been, as men mourn for their father. Nor was the accession of George the Fourth unattended by circumstances of danger. He had been separated from his royal consort for many years. The Princess Caroline had spent most of these years on the continent, and now the question came naturally to be asked, what course must henceforth be pursued in reference to her? and how was the king prepared to treat her? His Majesty had quite made up his mind on these heads. No consideration of public or private policy would

induce him to hold with her any further relations. He required that her name, which had heretofore kept its place in the Liturgy, should be struck out; and he commanded his ministers, by some process or another, to effect a divorce. We pass over scenes to describe which in detail could serve no good purpose, and content ourselves with stating, that the king and his ministers arrived at last at a compromise. It was agreed that the Queen should not be prayed for by name, and that so long as she should be satisfied to remain on the continent, her annual allowance of 35,000*l.* would be continued. But that in the event of her returning to England, or making any attempt to force herself upon his Majesty, or to claim her rights as his consort, steps should be taken to effect, if possible, a dissolution of the ill-assorted marriage.

The omission of the Queen's name from the Liturgy had been noticed on the 21st of February by Mr. Hume; and Mr. Brougham, as Her Majesty's Attorney-General, made some remarks upon her position; but nothing further occurred till the Houses separated for the Easter recess. It was in this interval that a plot came to light, and was defeated, of which the details are too well known to demand any lengthened repetition here. But one or two facts connected with it, which have never, as far as we know, been made public, deserve notice.

Thistlewood, the author of the plot in question, was born in the year 1770, and becoming early in life a convert to the doctrines of Tom Paine, passed over in 1790 to Paris, and took part in some of the atrocious scenes that were enacted during the first French revolution. He came back to England in no wise

cured of the moral mania which drove him from it; and when the troubles of 1814–16 began, he threw himself into them. He was tried with the elder Watson in 1816, for joining the insurrection in Spa Fields, and being acquitted on a point of form, was, with his fellow prisoner, suffered to go at large. Furious at the wrong which he believed himself to have suffered, he sent a challenge to Lord Sidmouth, in consequence of which he was arrested, convicted of a misdemeanour, and committed for a year to Ilchester gaol. He came out of it at the expiration of his term, more bent than ever on taking his revenge; and having succeeding in associating with himself a few desperate men, he arranged with them to assassinate the king's ministers, and to proclaim a republic.

It seems at first to have been proposed to assassinate the king himself on his way to open Parliament. That project, however, was abandoned, first, because the conspirators could scarcely hope to succeed in it, and next, because they arrived at the conclusion, that little would be gained towards the accomplishment of their ultimate designs, even if the king's life were taken under such circumstances. The death of the noblemen and gentlemen composing the cabinet was next proposed, and each little knot of assassins undertook to dispose of one or other of the victims as favourable opportunities might occur. The Duke had on this occasion a very narrow escape. He was seen by one of the gang coming out of the Ordnance Office on a certain evening, and followed; when Lord Fitzroy Somerset happened to meet him, and after a minute's conversation, the two gentlemen turned round together, and walked through the Green Park, arm in arm,

towards Apsley House. The heart of the murderer failed him, and he went back to his companions, to whom he reported, that he intended to have stabbed the Duke in the back, but that he was afraid to hazard the blow, because a gentleman with only one arm had joined his grace, and gone home with him. This story came out in the course of the subsequent examination of the prisoners, and the Duke confirmed its truth, for he recollected being dogged along Pall Mall by a man, who stood aloof when Lord Fitzroy entered into conversation with him, and slunk over to the other side of the street as soon as Lord Fitzroy gave his arm to the Duke and turned round with him.

Among others implicated in the conspiracy was one Edwards, a modeller, who asserted before the Privy Council, that he had joined the conspirators, from the first, in order to betray them; and who having ascertained that a cabinet dinner was to take place on the 23rd of February, at Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square, suggested to the band, that it would be well to abandon their scheme of individual assassination, and to fall upon the whole body of ministers and destroy them together. His suggestion was adopted, and a room being hired in Cato Street, an obscure alley leading out of the Edgeware Road, the conspirators laid up there in a loft over a stable, a quantity of arms, ammunition, and grenades, and met nightly to encourage each other, and to mature their plans. It appears that Edwards kept Lord Sidmouth conversant with all that was going on, and that Lord Sidmouth communicated the intelligence only to Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, and the Duke of Wellington. On the 22nd, however, Lord Harrowby, while walking in Hyde

Park, was stopped by a man, who, after giving his name, placed a letter in his lordship's hands. Lord Harrowby read the letter, which contained an avowal of the whole plot; and proceeding with it at once to the Home Office, a meeting of the cabinet was immediately called. It now came out that the plot had been known and considered for several days by a portion of the cabinet. The question was, therefore, presented to the rest of the ministers with perfect calmness, each being requested to state his views, as to the means which ought to be adopted for averting the threatened catastrophe, and securing the conspirators. That of the Duke, as we have ourselves heard him repeat it, was this,—That a strong body of police should be introduced into Lord Harrowby's house during the night of the 22nd, and kept concealed there even from the servants. That the ministers, in the course of the 23rd, should send thither their despatch boxes, each containing a brace of loaded pistols. That the dinner should go on, ministers keeping their despatch boxes beside them; and that the conspirators should be received, when they entered the dining-room, with a volley. Meanwhile the police, rushing from their place of concealment, should occupy all the outlets, and the gang be taken in their own snare.

It is a matter of history that the Duke's proposal was overruled. The risk to lives more valuable by far than those of a handful of desperadoes, was considered too great, and the plan was adopted of allowing the preparations for the dinner in Grosvenor Square to go on, Lord Harrowby's butler being kept in ignorance, till within an hour after the time fixed for the explosion of the plot, that the scene of the symposium had been

removed to Downing Street. Meanwhile Mr. Birnie, the active and intelligent magistrate at Bow Street, was desired to carry a force of police, well armed, to the loft in Cato Street, in surrounding which, and capturing the conspirators, he was to be assisted by a party of the grenadier guards. Mr. Birnie proceeded according to his instructions and called at Portman Street barracks for the troops; but finding that, though warned to turn out at a moment's notice, they were not quite ready, he hastened on with his police force, — only fourteen men, — to the place where the gang were assembled.* We need not stop to describe what followed. The police boldly ascended the ladder to the loft, in which, surrounded by fire-balls, grenades, and arms of every description, between twenty and thirty ruffians were assembled. There was a fierce scuffle, which cost the life of one police officer, and caused several to be wounded, during which some of the conspirators forced their way down into the street through the stable, while Thistlewood himself, with his fellow-leaders, Ings, Tid, Brent, and Davidson, escaped by a window over the roofs of some neighbouring houses. But the detachment of guards coming up, under Captain Frederick Fitzclarence, made prisoners of all the rest, though not till after the gallant leader of the

* It is well that magistrates should bear in mind, that the order to be ready to turn out at a moment's notice, means only, that the troops, warned for duty, shall remain in barracks, accoutred — not that they shall be under arms, and told off in marching order all day long. Mr. Birnie, in ignorance of this fact, expected to find the guards ready to move as soon as he showed himself, and was chafed and disappointed by the delay that occurred in getting them under arms, yet it did not exceed five minutes.

troops had twice narrowly escaped destruction, and several of his men were wounded.

The sequel of this story is well known. A reward of 1000*l.* was offered for Thistlewood and his companions, and on the following day they were taken in their beds. The evidence against them was complete, and being tried at the Old Bailey, they were convicted of high treason. The five men named above suffered death, being hanged first and afterwards beheaded. The more guilty of their dupes were transported, while such as were able to adduce any extenuating circumstances in their own favour, escaped with terms of imprisonment, more or less protracted. The effect of all this upon the country at large was very curious. Those among the better classes who had hitherto disbelieved, or pretended to disbelieve, the ministerial stories of disaffection, changed their tone, yet the spirit of disaffection itself was by no means extinguished. On the contrary, day after day brought in reports of secret meetings and drillings, especially in Glasgow, and in the mining and manufacturing districts round, insomuch that the government found it necessary to increase the military force at its disposal, and on the special recommendation of the Duke of Wellington, an additional amount of the militia of England and Scotland was embodied.

CHAP. IV.

THE QUEEN'S TRIAL.—ITS CONSEQUENCES.—THE FARCE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS.—DAWN OF REFORM IN PARLIAMENT AND OF FREE-TRADE POLICY.—REVOLUTIONS IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—MOVEMENTS ELSEWHERE.—THE CONGRESS OF LAYBACH.—CHANGE OF SYSTEM IN FRANCE.

1820.

For a brief space subsequently to these events, there was a lull, so to speak, in the storm of politics, but it soon passed away. The feud which had long subsisted between George IV. and his royal consort came to a crisis, and the honour, and indeed the security of the throne and of the constitution, were imperilled by the mode in which that discreditable quarrel was conducted.

The marriage of the Prince of Wales with Caroline, Archduchess of Brunswick, had been from the first an ill-assorted union. It resulted in an early separation, the blame of which may be fairly divided between both parties. Driven from Carlton House the Princess of Wales resided for a time at Greenwich; but receiving little countenance except from Queen Charlotte, she took the earliest opportunity, after the demise of her lamented daughter, to withdraw to the continent. Of her eccentric behaviour there rumours the most sinister were circulated, and in 1818, a secret committee was sent out to inquire into their validity, and to collect evidence, with a view to such further proceedings as it might be considered expedient to adopt. The wishes of the Prince Regent pointed, even then, towards a

divorce, and, on his accession to the throne, he pressed the measure earnestly on his ministers. But the cabinet, as has been stated elsewhere, refused to accede to his proposal except in the event of her Majesty's return to England and an attempt on her part to claim the social position and exercise the privileges of a queen consort.

It is not improbable, if a little more moderation had been exercised, that the queen might have been induced to live apart from England, where she had few old friends among the upper classes of society, and where there was little probability of her forming new ones. Unfortunately, however, the king consulted his personal feelings only, and insisted, since he was unable to get rid of her altogether, on treating her with every mark of outward disrespect. It became therefore a question with the cabinet, whether by resigning, they should leave the sovereign in the hands of those who were prepared at all risks to force the queen upon him; or whether by yielding more than some thought desirable, they should endeavour at once to save the honour of the crown, and to effect a compromise between an angry husband and his wife. After a good deal of discussion it was resolved to try the latter expedient, and the king was indulged by the removal of her Majesty's name from the liturgy. Thus a false step was taken at the outset, and it brought a prompt and heavy punishment in its train. No sooner was her Majesty informed of what she held to be so gross an insult, than she made up her mind to face every danger, and quitting Italy, where she was then residing, travelled by rapid stages, towards England.

There was much anxiety in London when intelligence

of this move came in, and a renewed attempt was made on the part of Government to ward off a collision. Authority was given to Mr., now Lord Brougham, then her Majesty's attorney-general, and to Lord Hutchinson, to meet the queen at St. Omers, and to offer her a larger annuity, not less than 50,000*l.* a year, provided she would remain permanently on the continent. But the queen would not listen to the proposal. She crossed the channel in the night of the 5th of June, and entering London on the afternoon of the 6th, proceeded, amid the shouts of an excited mob, to the residence of Mr. Alderman Wood in South Audley Street.

As soon as her determination to push matters to an extremity became known, the king sent for his ministers, and commanding them to lay before parliament the papers which had been collected in Italy, required that they should take such steps as might be necessary for the vindication of his honour. They had already pledged themselves to pursue this course, and being driven into a corner, they felt that there was no alternative except to go on. One indeed of their number, Mr. Canning, for private reasons of his own, refused to be a party to the proceeding. He resigned his seat in the cabinet, and with it the office which he held, that of President of the Board of Control. And then began a series of transactions, of which it may suffice to say, that while they gave a severe shock to the moral sense of the nation, they brought Lord Liverpool's administration, and with it perhaps the throne itself, to the brink of ruin.

The part played by the Duke of Wellington throughout the queen's trial, was necessarily a subordinate one. He consented indeed, together with Lord Castlereagh,

to meet Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman, the queen's attorney- and solicitor-general, and to consider with them whether any terms of compromise could even yet be effected; but the negotiation failed. The queen was not indeed unwilling to fix her residence abroad, provided a sufficient alimony were allowed her; and provided also, she were permitted to make use of her regal title wherever she went. But to the continued omission of her name from the liturgy, she would not consent, and she further insisted that the king, through his representatives, should officially introduce her to as many foreign courts as she might care to visit. It did not come within the powers of the Duke and Lord Castlereagh to yield these points. His Majesty's mind was quite made up that the queen's name should not be restored to the liturgy, and officially to introduce to foreign courts a princess whom he refused to receive at his own was clearly out of the question. All that was possible for them to concede amounted, therefore, to this : that her Majesty would be permitted to bear the title of Queen of England, and that wherever she went, his Majesty's representatives would see that she was treated with the respect due to her elevated station.

On these points, of little more than mere etiquette, the negotiation broke off, and, the blue bag being opened, the House of Lords became for months the scene of an investigation, such as had never been witnessed there before, and never, it is to be hoped, will be witnessed there again. The bill of " pains and penalties " brought in by Lord Liverpool, though twice carried, was sustained on the second reading by so small a majority, that the ministers considered it inexpedient to pursue the matter farther. Then followed, for the mob of

London, a perfect saturnalia. Respectable people were forced to illuminate their houses, and such as refused had their windows broken. The law seemed to have lost its force, and the police were powerless; and crowds parading the streets day and night, compelled every well-dressed person whom they met, to join with them in shouting "The Queen for ever!" By and by addresses of congratulation poured in upon her Majesty from all parts of the country; indeed the whole nation, except only the higher and more educated classes, seemed to be beside itself; and the peace of the metropolis was only partially preserved by collecting round it a considerable body of troops.

So early as 1816 the Duke had purchased Apsley House from his brother the Marquis of Wellesley, and soon after his return to England he began to rebuild it. He was his own architect on that occasion, being assisted only by Mr. Wyatt,—originally a barrister-at-law, afterwards his Grace's private secretary in Ireland, and now an architect rather from love of the art than through any settled purpose of adopting it as a profession. He was the brother of Mr. Wyatt who afterwards became Sir Jeffrey Wyattville. This gentleman was very eccentric in his habits, irritable in his temper, and impatient of contradiction. He appears to have enjoyed a considerable share of the Duke's confidence, and had charge of Apsley House with all its contents for some time. But at last they quarrelled, as is believed about a mere trifle, whereupon Mr. Wyatt quitted his patron, and never saw him again. He made various attempts in after life to get into practice as an architect, but failed, and died at last in great poverty, somewhere in the direction of Tyburn.

At the period of which we are speaking, Apsley House was so far finished, that the Duke was able to reside in it during the session of parliament, and to the honour of the mob be it recorded, that while the windows of all the other ministers were broken his escaped untouched. Yet little conspicuous as he made himself, he did not quite escape public censure. He had been recently advanced to the lord lieutenancy of Hampshire, the duties of which he discharged to the end of his life with exemplary regularity. Now in Hampshire, as elsewhere, a movement was made to get up a county meeting for the purpose of addressing the queen, on which, as was to be expected, the Duke threw cold water. For this he was assailed in the House of Lords by one of the opposition peers, who alluded to certain high authorities as exercising their influence to stifle the expression of public opinion in their counties. The Duke had spoken but once since the proceedings against the queen began, and that only to explain an Austrian custom relative to the wearing of uniforms. He now rose, and pointed out that a petition in the queen's favour had already been presented from Hampshire, with 9000 signatures attached, and then added, "that he did not see what good purpose could be served after that by going through the farce of a county meeting." No doubt the expression was a rash one. Had he been more accustomed to parliamentary tactics, he never would have made use of it, however honestly he might be convinced that county meetings were farces, and nothing else. But it fell from him without a moment given for reflection, and he may be said never to have heard the last of it. Not only did the leaders of the opposi-

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tion ring the changes on it at the time, but on every future occasion, when he found it necessary to oppose some popular delusion, the saying was cast in his teeth; and the corollary drawn from it, that he entertained no respect for the opinion of the people, because he was unacquainted with the principles of the constitution under which they lived, and that, therefore, the people could never trust him.

It is to this period that the proper beginnings may be traced back of two separate movements, which, had they been wisely dealt with, might have averted the hurricanes of party contest, which by and by passed over the empire, and of which the end is not yet.

In the session which was abruptly closed by the death of George the Third, the borough of Grampound had been convicted of bribery, and a bill was brought in to disfranchise the place, to which no serious opposition could be offered. This year the subject was again taken up, and on the 9th of May Lord John Russell proposed three resolutions to the effect—1st, that the people were dissatisfied with the representation as it then existed; 2nd, that boroughs convicted of bribery should be disfranchised; and 3rd, that the members taken from these boroughs should be given to populous places not at that time represented. In the spirit of the last of these resolutions, the House of Commons voted, that the members from Grampound should be transferred to Leeds. But the motion was resisted in the House of Lords, and instead of conferring the franchise on Leeds, two additional members were given to the county of York. The reform party was by no means satisfied with the result, though they wisely acquiesced in it. They had gained a standing

point, which was something; they resolved to rest upon it for a season, and to watch their opportunity for demanding more.

There is nothing, as far as we have been able to discover, in the Duke's papers to show how he felt on this occasion. Popular belief—or to speak more correctly, popular prejudice—describes him as opposed to change at every stage in his career; and therefore as acquiescing in the disfranchisement of Grampound with reluctance. We venture to doubt the truth of this assumption; and we shall have occasion by and by to show that if such was his feeling in 1820, it had undergone considerable modification a few years later.

The second movement made arose out of two petitions—one presented by Mr. Baring from the merchants of London, another forwarded from the Chamber of Commerce in Glasgow by Mr. Kirkman Finlay. These prayed for an open trade with China and India, as well as for the repeal of the usury laws and a reduction in the duties of various articles imported from the continent of Europe. It was the first step in the direction of free trade, and it was rejected, not so much because Lord Liverpool opposed it in the upper, and Lord Castlereagh in the lower house, as because it was held by large majorities in both houses to be incompatible with certain assumed peculiarities in the commercial and political state of Great Britain. There were questions involved in the discussion which the Duke did not pretend at that time to have studied. But his future proceedings show that his bias was against the removal of the protection from native industry; and to the opening of the trade with China he entertained to the last insuperable objections. He took no further

share in the debates, however, than to vote with his party; and the queen's trial coming on, to the utter confusion of all other topics, the subject dropped of its own accord.

Meanwhile, the political condition of the continent had become such as to excite the liveliest apprehension among all lovers of order and good government. The kingdoms of Spain and Portugal, deceived by their sovereigns and torn by the strife of factions, broke into revolt, which led to the establishment in the former of an ultra-liberal constitution, and in the latter of a regency, acting by the authority of a Cortes. The authors of these revolutions were in both countries men destitute of influence, except that which their position happened to give to them for the moment. Their party, consisting of the army, of a few merchants and lawyers, and of the mob of great towns, constituted but a small minority in the population of each country; for the peasantry were almost to a man in favour of despotism, and the priesthood sided with the peasantry. But after various vicissitudes the active minority prevailed over the inert majority. In Portugal the change was less violent than in Spain. It set up the authority of a central junta as representing the king, proclaimed the constitution, and dismissed from the service Marshal Beresford, with all who remained of his British officers; and it is fair to add that the people appeared to acquiesce quietly in the arrangements. The spirit of change went further in Spain, for it confiscated the property of the religious houses, abolished tithes, and sent the Jesuits into banishment; while the reins of government were seized by men whom twelve years at the galleys had not imbued with any deep respect for

regal authority in general or that of King Ferdinand in particular. Then followed the calling together of a Cortes, elected upon the principle of universal suffrage; the arrest and execution of obnoxious individuals; and a threat of declaring the throne vacant if the king should refuse his assent to such measures as the legislative body might require him to confirm.

The spark struck in the Spanish peninsula was not slow of spreading elsewhere. Italy, from one extremity to another, broke into a flame, for which indeed the labours of the Carbonari and other secret societies had long prepared it. In Sardinia, the sovereign had actually taken steps to improve the laws and establish a constitution. In the two Sicilies, the king, after promising all, had assumed, whether voluntarily or on compulsion from without, the policy of repression. Yet both states shared alike. The armies of Spain and Portugal had given freedom to their respective countries. The armies of Sardinia and of the two Sicilies proclaimed in like manner the Spanish constitution, and forced their princes to subscribe to it.

If the movement had ended there it is just possible that order might have been educed out of confusion, and Spain and Portugal and the Italian States might have settled by degrees into constitutional monarchies. But the Emperor of Russia, who since 1814 had given a great impulse to the progress of liberalism, received this same year a shock, which arrested him suddenly in the course on which he had entered, and drove him into its opposite. Poland, to which after its union with Russia he had restored its diet, suddenly turned round on him. All the measures proposed by his servants were rejected, and the national army which he

had unwisely separated from the imperial army, exhibited symptoms of having caught the disease which raged elsewhere. The czar appealed to the terms of the Holy Alliance, and gave them a meaning which at the outset they were not intended to bear. He invited the crowned heads to meet him personally, or by their representatives, first at Trappau, and by and by at Laybach, in order to settle in congress the affairs of Europe, and restore to its sovereigns their just rights.

We are not required to describe minutely all that occurred on these occasions. Enough is done when we state, that though Sir Charles Stewart, afterwards Marquis of Londonderry, who then filled the place of British ambassador at Vienna, attended, he was instructed in no way to commit himself to measures of repression, and that he adhered faithfully to his instructions. Indeed it was now, that there began that severance between the policy of England and of the great powers of the continent, which ended at last in something like estrangement. Equally with the most despotic of them all, England lamented the violence which had characterised the revolutions in the Spanish and Italian peninsulas, and would have willingly joined in any attempt to obtain by mediation an adjustment of the antagonistic claims of the sovereigns and their peoples. But she refused point blank to be a party to armed intervention, and protested against it.

With the march of the Austrian armies into Italy, and the rapid overthrow of the governments set up by the military classes there, we are not now concerned. The progress of events was watched with interest by the Duke, and it would be unjust to his memory if we were to disguise the fact, that he was perfectly satisfied

with its results. For it was one of his maxims that military men have no right, as such, even to criticise the governments which they serve; and that no government which is established suddenly and by violence can long work for the benefit of a nation. Though therefore he felt that the anxieties under which they then laboured, were in a great measure the consequences of violated pledges, he did not refuse to the sovereigns whose battles he had formerly fought an honest sympathy. But other and more startling causes of alarm were at hand. France reeled on the brink of a new convulsion. The constitution of 1817 worked ill. A strong Buonapartist feeling, intimately connected with ultra-liberalism, began to manifest itself both in the chambers and elsewhere, and another change in the electoral law was felt to be necessary.

It was shown sometime ago how the Duc de Richelieu succeeded in overmastering the extreme views of the reactionists, by raising the qualification for a direct vote in the election of deputies, and by reducing the number of deputies themselves from 390 to 260. Another precaution had been taken with a view to prevent the consolidation of a strong opposition. The chambers received a constant succession of fresh blood. Year by year a fifth of its members went out, and new men came in, of whom it was natural to expect, that they would prove either less able than their predecessors, or less willing to combine against the government. But the results did not answer the expectations which had been formed. In proportion as the influence of the ultra-royalists fell away, that of the Buonapartist liberals gained strength; till by and by the minister found it next to impossible to command success in any

measure, however reasonable. It was at this critical juncture that the murder of the Duc de Berri took place; which, though it proved to be the act of an individual enthusiast, exercised on the destinies of France, a disastrous influence. For M. de Cazes, who had already become obnoxious to the Count d'Artois and his faction, was openly charged by them with having been a party to that foul deed; and just as he had brought in a bill for remodelling the law of elections he was driven from office.

The fall of M. de Cazes threw power once more into the hands of the Duc de Richelieu; who adopted at once the project of law which his predecessor had bequeathed to him. After a severe contest it was carried through both houses. It increased the number of deputies from 260 to 450. It raised the qualification for one class of voters, and lowered it for another, while it fixed the duration of parliaments at five years, getting rid at the same time of those annual elections, which, ever since the passing of the act of 1817, had kept France in a state of continual ferment. Yet the new law, though a decided improvement upon the old, had still this defect, that it gave too large a share of political power to one class, and that the class which has little in common with the highest, and nothing at all with the lowest orders of society.

The Duc de Richelieu, who appears at this time to have been sincerely desirous of governing in a spirit of moderation, found difficulties grow upon him which he was unable to overcome. The new law was odious to the democratic party, and he failed to work it so as to gratify the ultra-royalists. He resigned, and was succeeded by M. de Villèle. M. de Villèle had a difficult

game to play, but on the whole he played it well. By excellent management he gained over both chambers, and established thereby the principle that, in a constitutional monarchy, the leader of the majority in parliament should be also the head of the government. Out of doors he put down numerous conspiracies; and if he showed, perhaps, some weakness in declining to prosecute the leaders, the position of many of these, of M. Lafayette among the rest, may well be accepted as his apology. In his foreign policy, on the other hand, he was less successful. Under the pretext of guarding against the spread of yellow fever, a cordon of troops had for some time been drawn along the Spanish frontier, which M. de Villèle was persuaded to increase till it became an army of observation, and which there were those in his cabinet who were already pressing him to employ in the suppression of liberal government in Spain itself.

Among English statesmen, none watched the ebbs and flows in French politics with deeper interest than the Duke of Wellington. He knew that if the revolutionary spirit were to succeed in France, nothing could save Europe from a repetition of scenes the prospect of which could not be contemplated without horror. On the other hand he dreaded well-nigh as much the triumph of those principles which cost the Bourbons their throne; but to which every member of the family except the king himself appeared to be wedded. In what spirit he dealt with these questions, when the legitimate opportunity of handling them was afforded, we shall take occasion presently to show. Meanwhile we return to the thread of our narrative.

CHAP. V.

THE CORONATION.—THE QUEEN'S DEATH AND FUNERAL.—THE DUKE VISITS PARIS.—CONDUCTS GEORGE IV. OVER THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.—PARTIAL CHANGES IN THE MINISTRY.—THE DUKE BEGINS TO TAKE PART IN THE DEBATES.—DEATH OF LORD CASTLEREAGH.—THE DUKE AND WILLIAM ALLAN.—CONGRESS OF VERONA.—THE DUKE AT PARIS.—HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO LORD FITZROY SOMERSET.

1820–22.

AMID such scenes as have just been described,— amid disaffection and tumult at home, and trouble and the dread of change abroad,— the two first years of the Duke's life as a statesman were spent. Whatever might be the feelings of the other members of the cabinet, he appears never to have entertained any serious apprehension in regard to England. He believed that the distress under which the people were suffering would pass away. He distrusted in no degree the loyalty of the nation, and like Lord Castlereagh, he anticipated that the mob itself would soon grow tired of cheering the queen, and uttering seditious cries as they passed the gates of Carlton House. Events fully bore him out in all these anticipations. With 1821 came a revival of trade and manufactures, and political agitation, which in this country at least, takes its rise for the most part in the want of employment, died out as men found better use for their time. Not that the desire of change in the representation of the country was laid aside. On the contrary, it gained fresh adherents from day to day, because the tenant-farmers of

England, with a considerable portion of the landowners, still suffered; and being unable by any other means to obtain redress for their grievances, they, like the operatives, began to speak of parliamentary reform as a panacea for all the ills to which the nation was liable. Hence when Lord John Russell brought forward his annual motion upon the subject, the majority against him, in a full house, was only 105 — a remarkable sign of the change which had taken place in men's minds, and a sure proof that, as far as England is concerned, revolutions, or the attempt to effect them, have a much more intimate connection with the stomachs than with the understandings of the people.

It was under such circumstances that the coronation of George IV. took place: a ceremonial which had been determined upon the previous year, but which their own unpopularity as well as that of their royal master had induced the ministers to defer. It went off with perfect success. An attempt on the part of the queen to force herself into the Abbey was resisted, and she saw, in spite of some cheers from the lowest of the rabble, that her day was over. History has recorded how her proud heart broke under the anguish of the disappointment, which was the more bitter because it had not been anticipated; and how, bearing her resentments with her to the grave, she left directions that her remains should be conveyed to Brunswick, and buried there. It seemed, too, as if in her death, not less than in her life, that unfortunate princess was to be the occasion of turmoil in England. The government not refusing to her the last resting place which she had chosen, directed that the funeral procession should pursue a particular route towards

the coast. The London mob determined that it should proceed by another. A tumult ensued, the military escort fired upon the people, and three lives were lost. Upon this, the magistrate, unwilling to shed more blood, gave orders that the will of the mob should be obeyed. The queen's body was carried through the heart of the city, and the authority of government suffered outrage. Two consequences ensued, of which we are bound to take notice, because, to a certain extent, the Duke may be said to be mixed up in them. The magistrate who yielded to popular clamour, whether rightly or wrongly, was displaced, and Sir Robert Wilson, an officer of Peninsular celebrity, having incautiously rebuked the troops for firing upon the people, was removed from the service.

The Duke was not in London when these events befel. It was the season of the year when, in the absence of more pressing demands upon his time, he was accustomed to visit the fortresses in the Netherlands; and he had embarked for that purpose on the 10th of August, the day before George IV. crossed from Holyhead to Dublin. He proceeded, after completing his tour of inspection, to Paris, where he had a long and interesting conversation with Louis XVIII., who, as well as M. de Villèle, consulted him on the state of Europe generally, and of the peninsular nations in particular. The French king had been urgently pressed by the northern powers to make common cause with them by withdrawing his minister from Madrid, as they proposed to withdraw theirs. But the Duke argued so strongly against the measure, pointing out the consequences which must inevitably follow, that the king, who had well-nigh yielded to

other solicitations, changed his mind. It was agreed that a plan of mediation should be concerted with England, which might, it was hoped, lead to such modifications in the Spanish constitution as would be acceptable to all concerned; and in the meanwhile the king promised to take no steps which might have a tendency to hurry on a crisis which he still believed to be inevitable. "Louis XVIII.," says M. Guizot, "placed confidence in the judgment and friendly feeling of the Duke of Wellington. He closed the debate in council, however, by saying, 'Louis XIV. levelled the Pyrenees; I shall not allow them to be raised again. He placed my family on the throne of Spain, I cannot let them fall. The other sovereigns have not the same duties to fulfil. My ambassador ought not to quit Madrid until the day when 100,000 Frenchmen are on the march to replace him.'"

The Duke's visit to Paris, if not quite so successful as he wished, cannot be said to have been fruitless. At least it secured delay in the execution of a project, which had there been any moderation in the councils of the Spanish insurrectionary government, or any instinct of command in the Spanish king, might have been averted altogether. It was followed by an incident which is interesting only so far as it furnished the Duke, in after life, with an opportunity of telling a story to which his peculiar manner of expressing himself gave remarkable zest. George the Fourth, after visiting his Irish subjects, and assuring them "he would drink their healths in a bumper of the strongest Irish whiskey," proceeded to Hanover; and passing through Brussels was there met by the Duke, who conducted him over the Field of Waterloo. The Duke explained

to the king all the movements in the battle, and pointed out to him the spots where men of note had fallen on both sides. "His Majesty took it very coolly," he used to say; "he never asked me a single question, nor said one word, till I showed him where Lord Anglesey's leg was buried, and then he burst into tears."

Meanwhile Lord Liverpool's cabinet found it necessary, in consequence of an apparent loss of strength in the House of Commons, to seek for supporters beyond the limits of the Tory party, and various changes in the distribution of place were suggested. Among others it was proposed that the Duke should go to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant. But this he declined. He had not yet made up his mind in respect to the abstract fitness of yielding to the claims of the Roman Catholics, or continuing to resist them. He had spent too much of his life abroad, and mixed too intimately with Roman Catholic statesmen, to entertain the same extreme dread, in a constitutional point of view, which was felt on that subject by some of his colleagues; and of the probable effect of the measure on the religion of the country properly so called, he always thought lightly. But he saw that there were so many difficulties in the way of a final settlement of the question, and, in 1821, believed the risks on both sides to be so nearly balanced, that he could not consent to play a part which might commit him prematurely to a policy of dogged resistance, or to its opposite.

Accordingly he remained at the Ordnance Office, while Lord Wellesley succeeded Earl Talbot in Dublin, receiving as his Solicitor- and Attorney-General, Mr. Bush and Mr. Plunkett. Now both of these gentlemen were able and strenuous supporters of the Roman Catholic

claims, as was indeed the new Lord-Lieutenant himself. But, on the other hand, a strong anti-Catholic was named in the person of Mr. Goulburn to the important post of chief secretary. All this as well as the coming in of the Grenvillites — the elevation of the Marquis of Buckingham to a higher step in the peerage, and the appointment of Mr. Wynne to the Board of Control, was not without its effect in gaining for the cabinet some votes in the House of Commons. At the same time, however, it created considerable alarm, among those ancient supporters of the administration who had taught themselves to consider the maintenance in its integrity of the settlement of 1688 as the one great purpose for which they existed as a party. And even to less earnest lookers on, it gave intimation of some possible change of policy, which, whether it came a few years sooner or a few years later, could not fail seriously to affect the national interests for good or for evil. Yet even these took courage, when, on the retirement of Lord Sidmouth, Mr. Peel was appointed to succeed him at the Home Office. And so the machine of state worked on, or was supposed to do so, much as it had done since Lord Liverpool was first called upon to form an administration.

And here it may be remarked that, for some reason or other, the personal feeling of George the Fourth towards his prime minister was not amiable. While he corresponded affectionately with the chancellor and Lord Sidmouth, and was more than polite to Lord Castlereagh, he held no further intercourse with Lord Liverpool than was absolutely necessary for the transaction of business. Indeed, it was his constant habit, when he desired to communicate with the head of the cabinet,

to send for the Duke of Wellington, to whom he opened his mind freely, and from whom he took in good part, as indeed he was accustomed to receive, advice which was always sound, though it might not be at all times palatable.

In addition to the cares arising out of commercial difficulties at home, and the troubled state of the peninsulas of Spain and Italy, the Greek insurrection, which began this year, proved a fruitful source of anxiety and annoyance to the British government. It was the more vexatious that the feelings of the Russian people were understood to be enlisted on the side of the insurgents; and that an opportunity was thereby presented to the Emperor Alexander, of following up the hereditary designs of his family, which he could scarcely be expected to forego. Now, besides that Turkey had been the ancient ally of England, the English government was naturally jealous of the spread of Russian influence in the West; and measures were in consequence adopted to prevent, if possible, the active interference of the czar in favour of the Greeks. It does not appear that the Duke took any prominent part in the negotiations which followed. He was quite as little disposed as his colleagues to encourage the growth of revolutionary principles in Europe. Though the personal friend of the czar, he was fully alive to the risk, that Greece, nominally independent, might become Russian in reality; and if he did not suggest, he at all events assented to the tone which was at that time taken in communicating with the Russian government. Diplomacy so far prevailed that Russia abandoned her design of affording armed support to the insurgents. But the iron had entered into the soul of Greece; and having fairly embarked

in the desperate enterprise, she went forward with it, till in the end, through the operation of causes yet to be described, she achieved her independence.

The great domestic question of the day was the repeal of the laws which excluded Roman Catholic noblemen and gentlemen from sitting and voting in parliament. Intimately connected with this, in the opinion at least of the advocates of emancipation, was the state of Ireland itself, which suffered at that time under the complicated evils of widely extended disaffection and a terrible famine. The Duke appears to have taken no part in the debate, which was brought on by Mr. Canning's motion, to admit Roman Catholic peers to sit in the House of Lords: but when the state of Ireland came under discussion, he defended the strong measures which the Government found it necessary to propose, and which resulted in the passing of an insurrection act, and the suspension of the law of Habeas Corpus, in that portion of the empire. He spoke on this occasion in reply to Lord Holland, very briefly, but with great clearness; indeed, it appeared as if at length he were beginning to understand, that one who had done such excellent service on the theatre of continental politics, could not, in justice to his own reputation or to his country, remain satisfied with playing a secondary part at home.

So passed the session of 1822,—a successful one upon the whole to Lord Liverpool's cabinet; and on the 10th of August parliament was prorogued, with a triumphant speech from the throne. It was the last in the composition of which, one of the ablest and bravest of the Duke's colleagues was destined to take part. For some time back, Lord Castlereagh, now

Marquis of Londonderry, had exhibited symptoms of a mind over-worked. He had become querulous, both at the Foreign Office and in the House of Commons ; taciturn and gloomy at cabinet meetings, and spoke with horror of his approaching journey to Vienna, where a congress of sovereigns and ministers was to be held. Indeed, so changed in all respects was he, that even of his personal appearance, to which up to that date he had been scrupulously attentive, he seemed to have become suddenly careless. The circumstance, if it struck the rest of the ministers at all, made no lasting impression upon them. But the Duke looked upon it gravely from the first. He was very much attached to Robert Marquis of Londonderry. He admired his courage, entertained a high opinion of his judgment, and felt besides, that to the support rendered on former occasions to himself by that statesman he had been greatly indebted. He could not therefore observe such a change in the whole bearing of the man, without taking the alarm.

He spoke to Lord Londonderry himself upon the subject, tried to combat the delusions with which he was affected, and advised him to see his family physician, which his lordship promised to do, but did not. At last, on the 9th of August, after walking with him to the Foreign Office, the Duke hurried in search of Dr. Bankhead, and not finding him at home, sent the following note:

"Dear Sir, — I called upon you with the intention of talking to you on the subject of the health of Lord Londonderry, and to request of you that you will call and see him. I told his Lordship that he was unwell, and particularly requested him to send for you ; but lest

he should not, I sincerely hope that you will contrive, by some pretence, to go down to his Lordship. I have no doubt he is very unwell. He appears to me to have been exceedingly harassed, much fatigued, and overworked during the last session of parliament, and I have no doubt he labours under mental delirium—at least this is my impression. I beg you will never mention to anybody what I have told you respecting his Lordship."

The warning cannot be said to have been given in vain, for Dr. Bankhead proceeded at once to Foot's Cray, and seeing how the case stood, slept in Lord Londonderry's house for two nights. He gave directions also that his Lordship's razors should be quietly removed, and took such other precautions as he believed to be necessary. Unfortunately the servant who disarmed the dressing case, neglected to search his master's pockets, in one of which a small pen-knife was deposited. No blame can attach to him, or to any one, but the fatal consequences are well known. Dr. Bankhead on entering Lord Londonderry's chamber about ten o'clock in the morning of the 12th of August, found him leaning against a table with his throat cut. He threw his arms round the doctor's neck, and giving feeble utterance to the words "It is all over," fell to the ground and expired.

No words can describe the effect produced by this catastrophe on English society in general, and among the members of the cabinet in particular. Though differing from some of them on various points, and especially in his desire to admit Roman Catholics into Parliament, Lord Londonderry, or to use the title by which he was better known, Lord Castlereagh, was held by them all in the highest esteem and respect. The

great characteristic of his nature was truth. He might be right or wrong in the opinions which he held, but he held none, or at all events did not advocate any, of the soundness of which he was not himself fully convinced. Of the slightest approach to finesse or intrigue he was incapable. This quality it was, indeed, which, while it commanded for him the steady friendship of the Duke of Wellington, rendered his intercourse with Mr. Canning always slippery, and for a time severed it. He was not popular as a minister; it was hardly possible that he should be so, for he had no sympathy with cant in any form, and was prone to express himself frankly in regard to it. But his views were those of a thorough English statesman of the school in which he had been bred. He had ever at heart the dignity of the crown and the honour and welfare of the nation. As a speaker he laid himself continually open to the sort of small criticism which, while it fastens upon inaccuracies of expression, rarely ventures to deal with sentiment or with principle. Yet he was complete master of the House of Commons, for even Mr. Brougham paid more deference to the manly statements of the Foreign Secretary than to the eloquent reasoning or brilliant sarcasm of any other speaker on the ministerial benches.*

* It is not generally known that the success of the Allies over Napoleon in the campaign of 1814, was mainly owing to the wisdom in council and the decision in action of Lord Castlereagh. The following letter from one who was present at the events which he describes, puts this matter in a very clear point of view.

Letter from Lord Ripon to Lord Londonderry.

"July 6, 1839.

"I would also refer to another occasion, on which the vigour of Lord Londonderry's mind, in a moment of difficulty and hesitation,

In consequence of the reluctance expressed by Lord Londonderry to undertake the mission to Vienna, it had

was attended with the most important results. You may remember the uneasiness which prevailed in the councils of the allied cabinets, after the success with which Buonaparte, having repelled with great loss the isolated movements of Blücher's first march upon Paris, afterwards fell upon the advanced divisions of the grand army beyond the Seine. The spirit of the allied forces was somewhat damped, the population in the rear of their line of operations showed strong indications of a resolution to carry on a desultory guerilla war upon their communications, and the more timid advisers began to talk of the policy of retiring behind the Rhine. That such a step would have proved fatal to the success of the campaign was obvious; but it was no less obvious that some new course of operations must be adopted, all the separate movements of the grand army, and of that commanded by Blücher, upon Paris, having hitherto failed in attaining that point. The fact was, that from his central position between the lines operated upon by those armies, Napoleon was enabled to fall with his main strength upon each of them separately; and, as at that moment, they were not *both* of them *singly* equal in force to his concentrated means, the advantage was greatly on his side; and he well knew how to avail himself of it. The army commanded by Blücher was much inferior in numbers to that commanded by Prince Schwartzenberg, and the thing to be done, therefore, was to reinforce Blücher to such an extent, as to insure the success of his future movements as far as numbers could insure it. No time was to be lost. But from whence were the reinforcements to be drawn? There was nothing immediately at hand but a small body of Russians, under General St. Priest, who were on their march to Rheims to join the corps to which they belonged in Blücher's army; and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps: one of Prussians under General Bulow, and one of Russians under Winzingerode, who were on their march into France from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They, however, belonged to the army of the Crown Prince of Sweden, who had not, I think, at that time, personally crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blücher

for some time been settled that England should be represented at the congress there by the Duke of Wellington. He had begun to make his preparations when a severe illness fell upon him, from which he did not sufficiently recover to set out upon his journey till after Lord Londonderry's death. That melancholy event brought back Mr. Canning to the administration. He had retired, as will be recollected, on the occasion of the Queen's trial, and remained for some months an in-

was to place these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was urged by a great authority as *insurmountable*. Lord Londonderry was present at the council when this matter was discussed; and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated that, in that case, the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given; that England had a right to expect that her Allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; and he boldly took upon himself all the responsibility of any consequences that might arise as regarded the Crown Prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed: Blücher's army was reinforced in time; the battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Buonaparte could oppose the march of the Allies on Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city.

"It is not then too much to say, that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Londonderry in this crisis decided the fate of the campaign. And had he been an ordinary man, without the talent to discern what the exigency of the moment required, without capacity to enforce its adoption, or without that influence over others which ensured their cordial co-operation, who can say how different the result might have been, or how long the pacification of the world might have been delayed?

"Excuse me for troubling you with so long a letter; and believe me, my dear Lord Londonderry,

"Ever most truly yours,

"RIPON."

dependent member of parliament. But he subsequently accepted the high office of Governor-General of India, for which country he was about to embark when the catastrophe at Foot's Cray occurred. Mr. Canning was not a favourite with a large and influential section of the cabinet. His views on many subjects were too liberal for them; and he was regarded as more intent on gratifying his own ambition than on promoting what they believed to be the best interests of the country. We are not called upon to say how far they who entertained this belief did him injustice; but it is well known that while in office he kept up relations more intimate with some of the leaders of the opposition than is usual among public men; and that when out of office he was not over-scrupulous in the attacks which he made upon the administration from which he had just withdrawn. On the other hand, Mr. Canning's abilities were admitted to be of the highest order, while his eloquence surpassed that of the most gifted of his contemporaries, even though the list included the names of Plunkett, Wilberforce, and Henry Brougham. Such a man, if he remained at home and joined the ranks of the opposition, could not but become very formidable: if he persevered in his intention of assuming the chief direction of affairs in India, his absence from parliament would be deplored as a national calamity. Under these circumstances, and because he considered Mr. Peel as yet too young, Lord Liverpool was induced to offer the seals of the Foreign Office to Mr. Canning. They were immediately accepted; and a good deal to the disgust both of the opposition and of some of his associates, Mr. Canning became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and leader of the House of Commons.

Though the Duke had not objected to the return of Mr. Canning to the administration, though in point of fact he assisted Lord Liverpool in bringing him back, it would be unfair towards both were we to conceal that he never thought of that distinguished man as of a safe politician. That this was owing in any degree to his Grace's aristocratic turn of mind, is the mere ill-natured assumption of persons who knew nothing either of the Duke himself or of his prejudices. Mr. Canning's social position, as far as position depends upon the accident of birth, was at least as good as that of Mr. Peel, and between Mr. Peel and the Duke of Wellington no one can say that there was any lack of confidence, political or otherwise. But his Grace's misgivings, however far they might extend, did not interfere with his determination to adhere rigidly, in the business on which he was about to enter, to the spirit as well as to the letter of his instructions. These were conveyed to him in a paper which Lord Londonderry had drawn up for his own guidance; and they embraced points which will scarcely be intelligible unless they be prefaced by a brief yet connected review of the general state of Europe at the moment.

Of the revolutions in Spain and Portugal, and of the effect produced by them on public feeling elsewhere, we have already spoken. They were succeeded first by similar revolutions in the kingdoms of Naples and Sardinia; and next by such a movement in Poland as sufficed to put an end to the dreams of liberalism in which, for six years previously, the emperor Alexander had indulged. There followed upon this the congresses of Trappau and Laybach, in which England refused to take any part, and the suppression by force of arms of

the Italian revolts, as well as the military occupation of the Italian kingdoms by Austrian troops. Meanwhile France had placed herself in a false position towards the two nations of the Spanish peninsula. The revival of the family compact led to just such an amount of interference at Madrid as, without arresting the course of the revolution, aggravated its bitterness. On the one hand, the French princes and their followers encouraged King Ferdinand to hold out, and all but promised the support of French bayonets; on the other, the Spanish Jacobins carried on constant communication with the revolutionary party in France. Both factions in both nations looked forward to a war, and perhaps equally desired it, as holding out the best chance of effecting the objects which they severally had in view. And so while the French government established its cordon, and collected a large army in rear of it, the leaders of the revolution in Spain made secret overtures to Portugal for the deposition, in case of need, of their own sovereign, and the junction of the whole peninsula under a constitutional government, with a prince of the house of Braganza at its head.

It was not, however, in the West exclusively that the political horizon had become overcast. The Greek subjects of the Ottoman Porte were in rebellion; and a war which began in Wallachia and Moldavia, soon spread into the Morea, and was attended by the most frightful cruelties. It was impossible that the Russian army and people could look with indifference on this struggle. They were bound to the insurgents by the strong tie of a common religion; and treaties which authorised the czar to interfere for the protection of that religion seemed to them to sanction, if they

did not positively require, his participation in the contest. Nor can it be doubted that had the Greek revolt occurred a few years earlier, the czar would have sustained it with all the strength of the empire. He was by no means insensible to the hereditary policy of his house. Visions of a Christian empire of which Constantinople should be the capital, had often crossed his mind; and if he did not seize the present favourable opportunity of realising them, it was because he was restrained by the still more urgent dread of change, with which the revolutions in Spain and Italy had impressed him. Still public opinion, which in Russia is very strong, was continually urging him to go to war with Turkey, for which indeed the injudicious interference of the Divan with the trade of the Black Sea, afforded more than a plausible reason. And no one could tell how soon this pressure, aided by the openly avowed eagerness of the army, might force him to measures which would throw the whole of Europe into confusion.

All this while hostilities went on between Spain and her South American colonies, to the extreme inconvenience of the commerce of the world, and especially to that of England. Its final results could not indeed be doubted, because the insurgents had prevailed in most of the provinces; and in the few where Spain still asserted her authority, it was powerless beyond the limits of the camps or fortresses in occupation of the Spanish troops. Meanwhile, the sea swarmed with pirates, which sailing under various flags, could neither be attacked by British cruisers, nor were amenable to any established tribunals on shore. For Spain, still claiming to be mistress of what she called the Indies,

could neither herself repress the evil, nor would she consent to its being put down by those whom she persisted in describing as rebels.

Finally, England had embarked in a crusade against the slave trade, in which she could find few nations to co-operate with her; while Russia had just issued an ukase by which she claimed the sovereignty of all that portion of North America which extends from Behring's Straits to the 51st degree of N. latitude, and forbade the ships of other nations to approach within a hundred Italian miles of the coast.

There were complications enough in these matters to try the skill and patience of the most practised diplomatist, and they received no trivial increase from the admission into the grand alliance, not of France only, but of the rulers of the lesser German principalities. Nor was this all. The kings of Naples and Sardinia had been treated at the Congress of Laybach as members of the great family of monarchs, notwithstanding that the systems of government to which they had given in their adhesion at home were condemned. And now it was well known that their presence had been called for, to advise as to the course which should henceforth be followed for the maintenance of order in Italy.

The letter of instructions which Lord Londonderry had compiled, and which was transferred without a single alteration to the Duke of Wellington, is a very interesting document. It touches upon every point which could be expected to come under consideration at the congress, and it handles them all so as to guard with scrupulous care, not only the honour of Great Britain, but the rights of foreign peoples as well as of

their governments. It assumes that the subjects of general discussion would be three: first, the Turkish question, external and internal; secondly, the Spanish question, European and American; and, thirdly, the affairs of Italy.

With this last question the representative of Great Britain was directed not to concern himself at all. As England had been no party to the military occupation of Naples and Sardinia,—as she had merely acquiesced in it with a view to prevent worse things,—so she felt herself excluded from advising upon the arrangement, now that it was complete, lest by so doing she should appear to admit the justice of a proceeding against which, from the outset, she had protested. The representative of Great Britain was, therefore, instructed to absent himself from all meetings at which Italian affairs were to be discussed, and, if possible, to avoid connecting himself with the congress till these should have been settled.

With regard to the Turkish question, as well external as internal, the course to be pursued was this. All possible measures were in the first instance to be tried, with a view to reconcile the differences between Russia and Turkey. These connected themselves, as we have just stated, partly with the right of protection which Russia was by treaty authorised to afford to Christianity in Turkey, and partly with certain restrictions which the Porte had recently imposed upon the navigation of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. When this object should have been so far attained as to avert the risk of actual collision between the two powers, then, and not till then, the condition of Greece was to be considered. Now, Greece had gained of late so much in the con-

test, that it was not easy to avoid dealing with the government which she had set up, as with a government *de facto*. Still the British plenipotentiary was cautioned to act with great circumspection in the matter, and above all to stand aloof from any engagement with the Allies, either to accept the Greek government as that of an independent state, or to compel the submission of Greece herself to the Porte by force of arms.

But by far the most tangled web of the whole was that in which Spain and her affairs were wrapped up; and not the least so, in that portion of it which embraced her relations with the revolted colonies, and the effect thereby produced upon the commerce of the world. As to the form of government which she had of late established for herself in Europe, that was a matter with which, in the opinion of the English cabinet, no foreign power had the smallest right to interfere. It rested entirely with the king of Spain and his subjects to settle their differences, if they had any, between themselves. And this important truth the representative of Great Britain was directed to urge with all his influence upon the Allies, and especially upon France. But the case of the revolted colonies was different. It was evident from the course which events had taken, that their recognition as independent states was become a mere question of time. Over by far the greater portion of them Spain had lost all hold; and it had been found necessary, in order to admit their merchant vessels into English ports, to alter the navigation laws, both of England and Spain. The letter of instructions accordingly directed the British plenipotentiary to advocate a removal of the difficulty

on this principle,— That every province which had actually established its independence should be recognised; that with provinces in which the war still went on, no relations should be established; and that where negotiations were in progress between a revolted colony and the mother country, relations with the colony should be suspended till the results of such negotiations were known. All this, however, was to be brought about only after a full explanation with Spain herself, and entirely by independent action. There was to be no concert with France or Russia or any other extraneous power in order to effect it. The policy projected was exclusively English and Spanish, and between England and Spain, and between them alone its course was to be settled. Other nations might or might not come into the views which England entertained, but upon their approval or disapproval of her views England was not in any way to shape her conduct.

Besides these more general questions England had some of her own, which the statesman who should represent her at the congress was directed to bring forward. Foremost among them all was the suppression of the slave trade, either by a general declaration from the Allies that it should be treated as piracy, or by obtaining from them an engagement that they would not admit into their markets any article of colonial produce which was the result of slave labour. There was besides a claim by England upon Austria for money lent to the latter power early in the late war; and the Russian ukase must be discussed and softened down.

It will be seen from this statement of facts, that the recognition of the actual independence of many of the

Spanish colonies had already been determined upon by Great Britain, and that the establishment of diplomatic relations with them all had come to be considered as a mere question of time. This is a point worthy of notice, because of the misunderstanding in regard to it which originated in a speech subsequently delivered by Mr. Canning in the House of Commons, and which still to a considerable extent prevails. It will be farther observed, that the principle recognised by Lord Londonderry as the true principle, was that of non-interference by Great Britain in the internal affairs of foreign nations. That the Duke of Wellington entirely coincided with Lord Londonderry in this respect, his Grace's conduct, both now and in the future stages of his career, clearly demonstrates. The leading object of his political life was to preserve the peace at home and abroad which it had been the great end of his military life to conquer. With that object uppermost in his mind he quitted London early in September, and taking, as he had been instructed to do, Paris on his way, entered there into some interesting conferences, both with M. de Villèle and the king. He gave a full account of these in his despatches to Mr. Canning, the first of which bears date the 14th of September. On the subject of the slave trade he found M. de Villèle not so much averse to co-operate with England, as unable to do so. The very fact that the abolition of the traffic had been pressed upon them by Great Britain rendered the French parliament and people disinclined to accede to it; and the minister could hold out no hope that his government would be able to take any steps towards fulfilling the engagements into which he admitted that they had entered. As to any benefit

which might be expected to accrue to themselves from the suppression of the traffic, because of the increased value given thereby to their colonial trade, of that M. de Villèle made very light. He spoke indeed of their African settlements as useless to the French people, and proposed to make them over to England in exchange for the Isle of France. But further than this he declined to go, because there were too many interests, both public and private, engaged to thwart his efforts, should he be so unwise as to make any.

The language of the French minister with regard to South America was not less vague and unsatisfactory. The question of the independence of these provinces was one on which he could not enter. England no doubt had extensive commercial relations with these provinces, but France had few or none. It might, therefore, be to the interest of the former power to treat them as independent states, whereas to the latter their independence was a matter of no consequence whatever. When informed that England was making preparations to acknowledge their flags, and that she had agents employed at that moment to inquire into their actual condition, and to report upon it, his answer was, "That France had not yet entered into relations with them in any form, and did not intend to do so till they should have settled their differences with Spain one way or another." M. de Villèle did not add, as he might have done, that France was feeling her way towards the severance of Spain from her colonies, and towards the establishment in the New World of one or two monarchies, with younger branches of the house of Bourbon at their head.

The third topic discussed at these conferences, and

on this the Duke afterwards entered both with the king and Monsieur, was the nature of the relations then subsisting between France and Spain, and the projects of the former power in reference to the latter. These M. de Villèle explained without any reserve. He stated that under cover of the sanitary cordon, 100,000 French troops were assembled;—that it was proposed to throw them in two columns into Spain;—that one column of 40,000 men was to pass into Catalonia, while the other, of 60,000, was to march by the great road through Irun upon Madrid. The sole object of this invasion was to insure the personal safety of the king, which was known to be at that moment in jeopardy; and to afford him the opportunity of gathering a native force around him, strong enough to protect him against the schemes of the revolutionists, and to enable him to establish such a constitution as the genius of the people seemed to require. France, the Duke was assured, entertained no views of conquest or aggrandisement, or even of prolonged occupation. She would withdraw her troops whenever the king of Spain should say that he was able to do without them, and render up every town and inch of territory of which they might have taken possession. Now, the invasion by France of Spain, on any pretext whatever, except only in the event of a breach of the peace on the part of the latter power, was a contingency to which the Duke steadily opposed himself. He pointed out that the step would be, not only unjust in itself, but impolitic;—that if the French government wished to hurry on the catastrophe of which they seemed to be afraid, they could not adopt a surer mode of doing so than by the invasion; just as the death of Louis XVI. and his family had been pre-

cipitated by the Duke of Brunswick's proclamation, and the entrance of his army into France;—that the revolutionists would probably remove Ferdinand from Madrid as soon as they heard of the passing of the frontier by French troops; and that even if these troops should reach the capital, Spain would not therefore submit, nor would Ferdinand be set at liberty. Nor did his Grace stop there. A war between France and Spain for such a purpose as that contemplated would, he argued, combine against the French government all the discontented spirits of both nations. It would be pronounced to be a war to put down free institutions; in which, if France should seek the support of her Allies, the only one among them which could boast of free institutions would feel it her duty to meet such request with a refusal. What must follow? Europe would be ranged into two hostile camps; that of absolutism on the one side, and of revolution on the other, amid which, not thrones only, but settled governments in every form might be overthrown.

The Duke's reasoning startled both M. de Villèle and the king. It was evident that they had not before looked at the question in all its bearings, and that the probable consequence of a call for support by France upon the Allies had failed to strike them. That, as his Grace showed, must necessarily give offence to all orders and classes of Frenchmen: for if it meant anything, it must mean this, that the French government distrusted either the military qualities or the fidelity of their own troops. Accordingly the king and M. de Villèle made haste to assure the Duke, that whatever France might do in the matter, she should do single-handed; and that she would not only not apply for

assistance from without, but that if such assistance were offered, she would refuse it. So far his Grace's diplomacy had gained something. It was a great matter for the peace of the world to confine the quarrel, if quarrel there must be, within as narrow a space as possible; and above all to hinder the czar from marching in force, as he made no secret of his anxiety to do, through Germany into Western Europe. His Grace could not, however, prevail upon the French government to refrain from bringing the question between France and Spain before the congress. The king and M. de Villèle both contended that vast moral good would accrue from a joint remonstrance on the part of the Allies against the treatment to which the king of Spain was subjected, and a joint threat, that if any violence were offered to his person or family, all would unite to avenge the outrage. The Duke was, therefore, forced to withdraw from the conferences, after he had explained that Great Britain would never assume without proof that violence was, or could be intended by Spain to her royal family; that she would never be brought to declare beforehand, what she might or might not do in any hypothetical case; and that if other governments took a different course, they would, in his opinion, do violence to the law of nations. Finally he showed, that if the purpose of the proposed agreement was to hinder Spain, through the influence of fear, from perpetrating a great crime, the whole transaction must necessarily be made public; and he took the liberty of adding, from his acquaintance with their national character, that Spaniards were as little likely to be deterred by threats from what they had resolved to do, as any people under the sun.

Having accomplished his mission in Paris, and made a report of his proceedings to Mr. Canning, the Duke pursued his journey to Vienna, in which city he arrived on the 29th of September. Here he found to his surprise, and by no means to his satisfaction, that the monarchs had agreed to meet in congress elsewhere; that instead of proceeding to business in Vienna, they had transferred the seat of their deliberations to Verona; and that they were spending the interval between the adjournment from one city, and the gathering in another, on a visit of friendship with the King of Bavaria. It was obvious enough why this change of place had been effected. Every petty Italian prince might present himself without exciting surprise, at Verona; whereas, a large assemblage of such personages in Vienna could not fail to attract the attention of the outer world; and the Duke's instructions prohibited him from giving any countenance to Italian discussions, by being so much as present at them. He made up his mind, therefore, to abide where he was till he should receive further advices from home, though in the letter which announced his intention of doing so he expressed an opinion that it would be politic to join the other plenipotentiaries in Verona, avoiding, as he would have done at Vienna, to communicate with them on Italian subjects.

The influence of Russia over the general affairs of Europe was at that time immense. The great sacrifices which she had made during the late war; the enormous armies which she had brought, and was still able to bring, into the field; and quite as much perhaps as either, the personal character of the Emperor Alexander, rendered her virtually mistress of every situa-

tion. It was of the greatest importance, under such circumstances, to win over the czar to a policy of peace, and the Duke sought and found an early opportunity of conversing with him confidentially, and in private. The first meeting took place on the 3rd of October, when they discussed together the Turkish question, particularly with reference to some ground of offence which the emperor discovered towards the late Lord Strangford, then English minister at the Sublime Porte. The Duke was fortunate enough to convince the emperor that Lord Strangford had not taken the part of Turkey as against Russia, and to obtain from his imperial majesty an assurance, that unless driven to it by some unforeseen and irresistible necessity, he would not come to an open rupture with the sultan.

Satisfied with what he had effected in this matter, the Duke again met the emperor in a day or two afterwards, and entered with him into a long and unreserved consideration of the state of Spain, and of the best means of dealing with it. He found the emperor much less tractable on that head than he had been on the subject of Turkish affairs. Spain was, according to the czar's view of the case, the very centre and focus of revolutionary principles; and it had become the duty, not less than it was the policy of the allied sovereigns, to trample them out at their source. Entertaining these opinions, he was decidedly in favour of armed interference, towards rendering which effective, he proposed to contribute 150,000 men. When the Duke proceeded to ask whether his imperial majesty had received any assurance that France would grant a free passage through her country to so large a force,

the czar replied that though he had received no such assurance, he could not entertain any doubt on the subject; because the same process which sufficed to extinguish Jacobinism in Spain would effectually prevent the spark from igniting in France itself. It was now that the Duke turned to excellent account the knowledge which he had obtained of the feelings of the French government in regard to that point, at his interviews with the king and M. Villèle in Paris. He assured the emperor that France would not only not permit, but that she would resist the march of Russians or any other foreign troops through her country; and his Grace did not fail to add, that in his opinion, she had arrived at a wise conclusion in so determining. The czar was startled by the Duke's announcement. The possible effect of reaction on the minds of the French people had not occurred to him till the Duke adverted to it; and after remaining silent for a while, he took a somewhat different line, though still pointing in the same direction. What was he to do with his army? It insisted upon being led against Turkey, and was only restrained because the czar had expressed his determination to employ it in putting down Jacobinism in the West. How should he be able to pacify or keep it in good humour, if he abstained from armed interference in the affairs of Spain? That was a question which the Duke had neither the power nor the will to answer. He met it therefore by stating, that the government of his Britannic Majesty was determined not to interfere between the king of Spain and his subjects;—that it could not assent to interference by any other foreign power;—that England had learned a lesson in her dealings with Sicily which she was not likely to forget,

for that the constitution which she gave to that island, though framed upon the model of her own, had completely broken down as soon as the British troops were withdrawn. He therefore strongly advised his imperial majesty to abstain from acts of violence against Spain, which country, he was satisfied, would do nothing to provoke a war, and if it did, might safely be left to France, with whom alone it was geographically in the power of Spain to come into collision.

The views of the English cabinet coinciding entirely with his own—that it would be unbecoming to withdraw from the congress merely because its locality had been changed—the Duke, after rather more than a fortnight's sojourn in Vienna, went forward to Verona. And here a little incident occurred, which may not in itself deserve notice, but which, because it was highly characteristic both of the individual and of the times, can scarcely be passed over. Among the most earnest and active of those who advocated the suppression of the slave-trade was William Allan, a quaker gentleman, remarkable in his day for benevolence and eccentricity. Every public man among his own countrymen knew him, and he had been in correspondence with almost all the leading princes and statesmen of the Continent. The Duke was therefore more amused than surprised when Mr. Allan waited upon him at his hotel one morning, and addressed him thus:—

"Friend, I must go to Verona."

Duke.—"That is impossible; haven't you read the order, that nobody is to be allowed to enter the town unless he belong to one of the embassies?"

Allan.—"Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must enable me to do so."

Duke.—"How can I do that? You don't hold any office, and I have none to give you."

Allan.—"Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must carry me thither."

Duke.—"Well, if I must, I must; but the only thing I can do for you is to make you one of my couriers. If you like to ride as my courier, you may do so."

Allan.—"Friend, I told thee that I must go to Verona, and that thou must carry me thither; I will ride as thou desirest, and am ready to set out immediately."

And the quaker did ride as the Duke's avant-courier; and reaching his destination before his Grace, introduced himself to the emperors of Austria and Russia and the other crowned heads, and lectured them all round on the iniquity of the traffic in negroes.

The Duke arrived at Verona on the 15th of October. It was already crowded with the *élite* of European society. The Emperor and Empress of Austria and their suite were there, as well as Prince Metternich, Prince Esterhazy, Count Zichy, and others. The Emperor of Russia had brought with him M. Pozzo di Borgo, M. Talestcheff, Counts Nesselrode and Menschikoff, with a large military staff. The Duke's personal attendants were Lords Londonderry, Clanwilliam, Marcus Hill, Burghersh, and Mr. Seymour. The King of Prussia brought with him the Princes William and Charles, Count Bernsdorf, Prince Hatzfeldt, and Baron Humboldt. There were present also the Archduchess of Austria, at that time Duchess of Parma, the Grand Duke and Duchess of Tuscany, the Archduke and Duchess of Modena, the King of the Two Sicilies, with the Duchess of Florida, the Prince of Salerno, the king's confessor, and the King and Queen of Sardinia.

Viscount de Montmorency, the Marquis of Caraman, and M. de Chateaubriand, represented France on that memorable occasion. Nor must the names be omitted of the more distinguished of the ladies, whose presence added lustre to the gathering; for wit and beauty could not be absent from a circle which embraced the Countess Lieven, the Princess Zenarde Wolkonskoi, Countess Toltstoy, Princess Oscar, and Viscountess de Montmorency.

We need not stop to describe the constant succession of gaieties which marked the progress of every day while the congress lasted. Never since the foundations of the old city were laid had Verona witnessed scenes of such surpassing brilliancy; for even a troop of practised comedians had not been forgotten; and balls and theatrical representations carried far into the night scenes half of business, half of pleasure, which renewed themselves morning after morning to the great apparent delight of all who took part in them.

Into the round of gaiety, which never slackened, no one threw himself with greater *abandon* than the Duke of Wellington. Fond of society, and especially of the society of beautiful and gifted women, he met in the frankest manner all the advances that were made to him; and indulged to his heart's content in that interchange of pleasant sayings and doings, in which few public men of his day knew better than himself how to take part. And it is worthy of remark, that more than all the other diplomatists assembled there, he was courted and caressed; not merely because of the renown which attached to him personally, but because it was hoped to work through his self-love upon his temper, and thus to render the policy of England, concerning which much

anxiety prevailed, more in unison than it might otherwise be with that of the continental governments. But the politicians, female as well as male, who indulged in these speculations entirely mistook their man. To whatever weaknesses he might be liable—and he was not exempt from the short-comings of human nature—the Duke was always so far master of himself, that he never gave his confidence lightly to any one; and from a course of action to which duty, or a conviction of its fitness pointed, neither blandishments nor their opposites could, under any circumstances, turn him aside.

It is not our province to describe in detail the proceedings of the Congress of Verona, memorable as in the history of Europe these must always continue to be. We have to deal but with one member of that august assembly, and with the manner in which he exerted himself to sustain the credit of his own country, and to effect the general purposes to which he was instructed to attend. Of these we have elsewhere stated that there were three which deserved, in an especial manner, to be regarded as English; and though they did not come on for discussion immediately, and only one was discussed in congress at all, it may not be amiss if we say all that can be said about them in this place.

The Austrian debt, which was of old standing—the money having been lent so long ago as 1794—proved a hard matter to deal with. Prince Metternich refused in the first instance to acknowledge it, though the Duke produced the securities granted to the lenders, and the deed which had assigned the loan to the British government. The emperor was more modest. He could not, as a man of honour, repudiate the claim; and acknowledged, that if called upon to give judgment in a court

of law, he must decide against himself. But he reasoned *ad misericordiam*, that forasmuch as many pecuniary transactions had occurred between the two countries since 1794, into none of which any reference to the old debt had been introduced, Austria was justified in concluding that it was considered by Great Britain to be cancelled. The result was just such a compromise as, under the circumstances, might have been expected. Austria, which was really unable to pay, obtained time, while England consented to accept, when it could be got, a quantity of quicksilver in lieu of what she had a right to demand in gold.

The issues of his Grace's conference with the Russian government on the subject of the ukase, were not more decisive. M. Talestcheff protested that no wrong was intended to England or to any other country by that document;—that Russia did not profess to be fully acquainted with the geographical position of the territories comprehended in it, and that she was perfectly willing to leave the question to be settled between the English minister for foreign affairs, and her own representative at the court of St. James's.

The question of the slave trade was one of graver moment, and it underwent many discussions, as well in private between the Duke and the plenipotentiaries of the several powers, one by one, as publicly and in congress. The private opinions of Russia, Prussia, Austria, and even of France, were all in accord with those of England. Their representatives agreed with the Duke that the traffic was a disgrace to the Christian world; but to each separate scheme which he brought forward for its suppression they entertained insuperable objections. The utmost, therefore, which he succeeded in

obtaining, was a reissue of the joint condemnation of the traffic, which had been first pronounced in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna, and a special assurance from France, that as soon as the state of public feeling would allow, she should take active steps to fulfil the treaty into which she had entered with England.

In the conferences which referred to the affairs of Italy the Duke took no part. He never attended any of them. As a private friend of the sovereigns and their governments, he did not, indeed, refuse his advice when it was solicited, and he was successful in arranging for Austria a plan by which she might be able finally to evacuate Sardinia and Naples in the autumn of 1823. When the questions at issue between Russia and Turkey came on, he was, however, prominent in urging upon the latter a policy of peace, which was happily concluded between the two countries on terms honourable to both.

Turkey, it was understood, had already withdrawn her troops from Wallachia and Moldavia, to which hospodars were again appointed, and she now agreed to give a free passage into the Black Sea to the merchant vessels of all nations. As to Greece, all that the Allies then considered it judicious to afford her was an expression of sympathy, as well as the recognition of her flag, so long as it was not made use of to cover piracy. Thus far the plenipotentiaries of Austria, England, France, Prussia, and Russia were at one. But in the great question of all, that relating to Spain, the English plenipotentiary stood alone; and though he fought the battle of right assiduously and ably, he fought in vain.

From the date of the congresses of Trappau and Laybach, there had arisen among the great continental powers

extreme jealousy of England. The feeling was an old and a bitter one in France, which her growing desire to become a commercial nation served only to aggravate. For she was too much exhausted by war and its consequences to have any capital at her disposal; and seeing England always ready to avail herself of openings which she, for want of means, could not approach, she had learned to attribute to the grasping tendencies of the English government, and the supineness of her own, arrangements which were the necessary results of active commercial enterprise on the one side, and the total absence of it on the other. Austria, Prussia, and Russia, on the other hand, were angry that the government of a free state should refuse to co-operate with them in repressing the growth of freedom elsewhere. Hence, though England never expressed her approval of the military revolts in Spain and Italy, or even in South America, still, because she declined to be a party to the suppression of the free constitutions in which they issued, Austria, Prussia, and Russia spoke of her as the champion of revolutionary principles all over the world.

Again, things were greatly changed, so far as Austria, England, and Russia were concerned, since the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. Then Austria stood in an attitude of something like antagonism towards Russia, and leaned upon England. Now the czar being cured of his extraordinary liberal sympathies, Austria separated from England, and ranged herself on the side of Russia. The removal of Capo d'Istria from the emperor's councils had, moreover, led to a close intimacy between his imperial majesty and Prince Metternich, who soon came to exercise almost as much

influence at St. Petersburg as he did at Vienna. Still there were points on which the views of Russia and Austria could not fail to be divergent. They were equally hostile to the growth of liberal opinions everywhere. They were equally bent on suppressing them in Spain, as they had been suppressed in Italy. But the czar was anxious to take an active part in the work by moving his troops into western Europe, while Metternich dreaded nothing more than the march of a Russian army through Germany. When, therefore, the project of a Spanish invasion by Russia was mooted, Metternich took part with the Duke in resisting it, and he was equally urgent in his opposition to the czar's second proposal, viz. the establishment of a Russian army of observation in Sardinia. These points having been carried, however, Metternich went completely round; and as Prussia held that the four great continental powers ought not to differ on questions of strictly continental policy, the Duke found himself alone in resisting a plan of interference in the affairs of Spain.

The patience of the Duke had often been tried in the conduct of military operations; the demands now made upon it in his character of a diplomatist were equally incessant. It never failed him; nor was he either less assiduous or less skilful in conducting the negotiations which had been entrusted to his management than he had been in dealing with the strategy of his enemies and the caprices of his allies. Day by day he saw separately the monarchs or their ministers. He placed the subject under consideration before them in such a light as the peculiar circumstances of each required. To M. de Montmorency he spoke of the impolicy of a

rupture with Spain, urging the disgrace as well as danger to France and her government of calling in the assistance of any other power, should such a rupture occur. End as it might, war must necessarily bring evils upon France; for, first, there was the expense attending it; next, the inconvenience of keeping an army of occupation in Spain; thirdly, the humiliation which would befall the king's government in consequence of the dictation to which it would be subjected by the action of a council of allied ministers in Paris; and last, and not least, the danger that the French people, and even the French army, disgusted by such a state of things, might themselves conspire against the monarchy, and overthrow it.

His arguments with the Emperor of Russia were neither less able nor less telling. The czar had no confidence, and did not profess to have any, in either the military qualities or the fidelity of the French army. He was, therefore, eager to bring Russian troops into the field; and endeavoured to show that their co-operation with French troops would strengthen rather than shake the throne of Louis XVIII. He was supported in this view by M. de Montmorency, who either did not know, or was determined not to regard, the sentiments of M. de Villèle on that subject. But the Duke's representation of what had passed between himself and the French government in Paris staggered the emperor now as it had done when first brought before him in Vienna; and the corollary drawn from it came in well. Assuming that Spain should be overrun, could she be left without an army of occupation? And assuming that France single-handed brought the war to a successful issue, would his imperial majesty

desire to see Spain held by a purely French army? The emperor replied in the negative; and then came the difficulty, how was this admitted evil to be avoided? Still, though France arrived at one conclusion in reference to this matter and Russia at another, they were both agreed so far, that the revolutionary principle in Spain ought to be put down; and Austria and Prussia agreeing with them, it only remained to devise some line of action which should bring the whole weight of the alliance to bear upon that contingency.

The plan brought forward by France, and assented to by the three continental powers, was that the Allies should sign a *procès verbal*, in which the king of Spain and his family should be declared to be under protection of Europe, and Spain threatened with a terrible vengeance if any injury were done to them. Russia, indeed, desired to go farther; she asked for a public sentence of condemnation on the system of government established in Spain, as dangerous to the peace of Europe; and was with difficulty prevailed upon to withdraw from that demand. For the czar entertained the utmost horror of military revolts, and did not scruple to charge the Spanish minister at his court with having distributed money among the Russian soldiers, in order to corrupt them. On this head, however, Austria held back from him, and he consented that the *procès verbal* should run as France had suggested. And now the Duke was appealed to for his concurrence in the arrangement. It was civilly but firmly refused. There had occurred nothing to show that the life of the king of Spain, or of any member of his family, was in danger. To threaten Spain with vengeance in the event of her committing a crime, to

commit which she had shown no inclination, was to offer to a high-minded people a gratuitous insult; which they could not be expected to receive tamely, and in repelling which they were likely enough to take steps which must precipitate the war which England was anxious to prevent.

While these points were under consideration, the Duke took a step which, had there been any vigour in the councils of the French government, ought to have given a turn to the whole course of affairs. Perceiving that M. de Montmorency and M. de Villèle were acting on different principles, he explained to Sir Charles Stewart how affairs stood at Verona, and authorised him to show the despatch to the French minister. It did not immediately transpire what effect this communication produced upon the court of the Tuileries; but the Duke's efforts to avert the evils of war were not, on that account, intermitted. He pointed out to the congress that a treaty of alliance, as against Spain, must, so far as Austria, Prussia, and Russia were concerned, prove a dead letter; and that France alone was in a geographical position to attack her. But against such attack he entered his protest, because, as far as appeared upon the surface of things, there was no justifiable ground for it. At the same time he thought that, in order to remove every cause of bitterness, the Allies should request one of their own members to mediate between France and Spain. Whether in sincerity or the reverse, the scheme was taken up by Prince Metternich, who proposed that England should undertake the office of mediator. But to that France objected; first, because, as M. de Montmorency frankly allowed, there was really no question at issue between the two nations;

and next, because the English government, holding the opinions which it did, was not likely to express itself in terms sufficiently firm respecting the wishes of the government of France.

The refusal of France to accept the mediation of England being communicated to the Duke, he at once withdrew the assent which he had given to Prince Metternich. England, he said, had no personal interest to serve by interfering in the matter; and would certainly not undertake a thankless office, unless she possessed the full confidence of France. Prince Metternich, on the other hand, objected to any other single state as a mediator; and proposed that each should address to the Spanish government a note expressive of its own feelings on the subject. He carried with him, at once, France, Prussia, and Russia. The Duke alone declined to give an opinion, till he should have had an opportunity of seeing in what tone the notes were composed.

It was pretty clear that, after arriving at this conclusion, the four powers experienced considerable difficulty in the concoction of their notes. Twelve whole days elapsed before the French plenipotentiary was ready with his; which the Duke, after he had read it, pronounced to be objectionable both in style and matter. Probably M. de Montmorency was not greatly surprised at this, for he had been unable so to express himself as to meet in any manner the views of his own government as explained to him by the Duke. He therefore asked leave of his colleagues, after they should have prepared their letters, to carry the whole, including his own, to Paris, and to get the opinion of the king and of M. de Villèle upon them, before proceeding to act. Meanwhile, two papers were put in by him to

the congress; one of which let out the fact that there had been a great deal too much tampering by France with political parties at Madrid, ever since 1820; while the second contained three propositions, on which the Allies were requested to decide. The propositions took the subjoined form: —

1st. In the event of France finding it necessary to withdraw her minister from Madrid, and to break off diplomatic relations with Spain, were the Allies prepared to act in like manner?

2nd. If war should arise between France and Spain, in consequence of this proceeding, were the Allies prepared to give to France a moral support?

3rd. Should circumstances occur rendering it expedient for France to apply to her Allies for material support, were they prepared to afford it, and to what extent?

To these suggestions, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, replied in a tone corresponding with the temper of their respective sovereigns. Russia, treating the establishment of anti-revolutionary principles in Spain as the first object in view, was prepared to go all lengths, and in the event of war to support France with her entire military strength. Austria was ready to follow the lead of France in diplomacy, and to afford material support also, provided a congress to be called for that special purpose should decide that such support was necessary; while Prussia would do as her Allies did in other respects, and give as much material support as her own circumstances would allow. All three were alike prepared to withdraw their ministers from Spain, should France find it necessary to withdraw hers, though

two indulged the hope that further proceedings would not be necessary; while the third alone anticipated war, and was ready to take an active part in it.

The Duke's decision was anxiously looked for; and it came. It was against the whole proceeding, and he followed it up by a long conference with M. de Montmorency, in which he enumerated, one by one, all the evils which a treaty, based upon such premises, would probably bring upon France.

It was on the 27th of October that the four powers came to these conclusions, and on the 31st it was further settled that a *procès verbal*, should be addressed to the head of the Spanish government, communicating the line of policy which it was determined to pursue, and explaining the reasons for it. In the Duke's estimation, this was to go many steps further in a wrong direction. He had come to Verona in the hope that the Allies would at all events be open to arguments in favour of peace. He found them bent on such a course as would render the preservation of peace impossible. For though the ministers by and by reduced their ideas to a definite shape, the incidents which they agreed to accept as leading necessarily to war appeared to him fallacious in the extreme. They were these:—First, an armed attack by Spain upon France. Second, any personal outrage offered to Ferdinand VII. or to any member of the Spanish royal family. Third, an act of the Spanish legislature, dethroning the king, or interfering in any way with the right of succession. What, however, could his Grace do? Austria, Prussia, and Russia accepted the conditions readily, adhering at the same time to the substance of the notes which they had previously put in. He took a day or two, as if to consider,

and then produced a paper of his own, in which the three hypothetical causes of war were considered separately. He showed first that an attack by Spain upon France was an occurrence beyond the range of human probability. Next, that though according to the usages of civilised nations the persons of monarchs were held to be sacred, to extend a character of sanctity to those of other members of the royal family was a thing never before heard of in the history of the world. And lastly, that till the Allies should be informed on sufficient authority that a plan for dethroning Ferdinand or changing the succession in Spain was actually in progress, to assume that such crimes might be perpetrated was to insult the whole Spanish nation. For his own part he must decline to have any share in the transaction, or to deliver an opinion upon purely hypothetical cases, farther than this, that if the independence of Spain were assailed without just cause, Great Britain would be no party to the proceeding.

The Duke's public document chafed without convincing those to whom it was addressed. His private remonstrances were received in a better apparent spirit, but proved in their results equally inefficacious. It was to no purpose that he pointed out how galling to the self-respect of a high-minded people the proposed document must be; how different in its character, and probably in its effects, from the separate remonstrances of any number of foreign ministers, all acting on the spur of the moment, and without concert among themselves. These, if the safety of the royal family was threatened, might perhaps avert the danger; but a preconcerted announcement from all the powers simultaneously—that under certain circumstances they would treat Spain as

a common enemy — could have no other effect than to irritate Spanish pride, and to drive the Spanish people into the commission of the very act which the declaration was intended to prevent.

Of the temper of the continental powers at that time towards England some idea will be formed, if we observe the eagerness with which their representatives took up and circulated among themselves reports injurious to her honour. One of these, which proved a frequent subject of conversation in Verona, deserves, from its very absurdity, to be specified. There was a Spanish gentleman, a M. Carnacero, with whom the Duke had formed an acquaintance in Paris, and who, happening to arrive at Vienna while his Grace was there, called upon him, and not unnaturally discussed with him the state and prospects of his own country. The visit of that gentleman to the Duke's hotel had not passed unobserved, and now finding how determined his Grace was, not to commit his government to a policy of intervention, a story was got up in Verona, that M. Carnacero had been employed to conclude with him a convention, whereby the Duke, in return for certain commercial and other privileges secured to England, pledged himself to support the cause of Spain against France at the congress. The tale, as we need scarcely stop to observe, had no foundation whatever in fact, though the English newspapers would appear to have given some countenance to it; on the contrary, his Grace had replied to M. Carnacero's expressions of civility — as that "Spain was anxious for a close alliance with England, and desired in all respects to follow her political lead" — by observing — "That in this case Spain must confine her attention to her own affairs, instead of trying to excite

disturbances in France, and bribing her soldiers, as she had done those of Naples and Piedmont, to revolt."

Such was one of the silly rumours in spreading which ministers and attachés sought to avenge themselves on the obstinacy of the Duke and the ultra-liberalism of the government which he represented. Another, of a graver nature, scarcely admits of so clear an explanation. There had been some correspondence of late between the Portuguese government and Mr. Canning on the subject of the treaty by which England was bound to defend Portugal against foreign invasion. In the course of this correspondence the Portuguese minister informed Mr. Canning that he was about to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive with Spain, and requested to be informed how far such alliance would affect the guarantee; but before any answer could be sent to the question, he communicated the fact that the alliance had actually been concluded. The peninsular nations, equally with the Allies, made as much of this correspondence as its terms would warrant. They arrived at the same conclusion — that Mr. Canning had pledged his government to defend Portugal against invasion from France, even if by joining Spain in a war of aggression she should bring the evil on herself. The Duke, of course, declared that he did not so read Mr. Canning's assurances; nevertheless he considered the matter to be so important that he wrote home about it, and advised Mr. Canning to embrace the earliest opportunity of putting himself and the British cabinet right before the rest of Europe.

So passed the time up to the 21st of November, when the notes of Austria, Prussia, and Russia were separately read. The Duke objected to them all, but with-

out effect, for on the 22nd M. de Montmorency set out with them for Paris, whence, together with his own, it was agreed that they should in due time be forwarded to Madrid. He did not, however, depart till the Duke had taken occasion to caution him against the transmission of his own note, expressed as it then was. It was not true, as the French plenipotentiary represented, that France was acting with the entire concurrence of her allies. England had given no sanction, and never could give any, to a course which she entirely condemned; and unless the terms of the French note were so altered as to make this appear, he (the Duke) would feel himself under the necessity of giving to it a public contradiction.

The minds of the continental sovereigns and their ministers were so completely engrossed with schemes for the repression of revolutionary principles in Europe, that they found little leisure to attend to the Duke's proposals in regard to the Spanish South-American colonies. They read his paper, which was drawn up in the spirit of his instructions, and which he handed in at the meeting of the 26th of November; but they declined to take it into consideration, contenting themselves with the remark, "That it was a subject of deep regret to them that England should stand forth as the protector of Jacobins in all parts of the world; but that they (the Allies) had neither the power nor the inclination to prevent it." It is scarcely necessary to add that the coolness which was already apparent on their side suffered no abatement in consequence of this communication, and that the Duke withdrew from among them more dissatisfied than ever with the turn which affairs had taken, and more distrustful of its issues.

On the 28th of November the Duke waited upon the Emperor of Austria to take his leave. Not much conversation passed between them, but it was of a friendly nature, and when his Grace rose to depart, the emperor touched again upon the subject of the Austrian debt, and delivered himself in becoming terms respecting it. His Grace's parting interview with the Emperor of Russia, which occurred on the 27th, was both longer, and more generally interesting. The Duke availed himself of that opportunity again to express his regret at the prospect of war with which Europe was threatened; and to repeat all the arguments which he had formerly used, to show both its injustice and its folly. The emperor, on the other hand, dwelt upon the mischievous effect in other countries of the example set by Spain, and lamented that England should now hold aloof from the policy of order on which her allies had entered. There was, however, no help for it. England, with her popular government, could hardly avoid taking part with revolutionists everywhere; whereas the line of the continental governments pointed in an opposite direction, and they must follow their course as England followed hers. Moreover, it was the clear duty of Russia, in the present instance, to take the lead in this movement. If she refrained from doing so, no movement could be made, because the armies of France could not be depended upon, and Austria and Prussia without Russia could accomplish little. It was indeed quite possible that if France entered singlehanded upon a war with Spain she would be beaten; and if beaten in the field, it was not to be expected that she would escape internal convulsion. But for every contingency Russia was prepared. She was able, with the

support of Austria and Prussia, to crush revolution both in France and Spain; and if the necessity should arise, she was determined to do so.

The Duke heard his imperial majesty to an end, and then ventured to assure him "that there was no sympathy, and could be none, between England and Revolutionists and Jacobins anywhere. The system of English government was founded on respect for property; Jacobinism or revolution, in the sense which his imperial majesty applied to the term, on the confiscation of property. All for which England pleaded was the right of nations to set up over themselves whatever form of government they thought best, and to be left to manage their own affairs so long as they left other nations to manage theirs. Neither he nor the government which he represented was blind to the many defects which disfigured the Spanish constitution; but they were satisfied that the best remedy for these would be provided by time, and to that greatest of all practical reformers he advised that Spain and her constitution should be left." The emperor could not gainsay the justice of these remarks, neither was he willing to be persuaded by them; so, after expressing himself well pleased with the settlement which had been effected of the Turkish question, he embraced the Duke, and they parted.

From Vienna the Duke proceeded to Paris, where he arrived on the 9th of December, and the same evening he had an interesting conversation with M. de Villèle. He found that minister quite as desirous of avoiding a rupture with Spain as he had been when they last discussed the subject together. Indeed the state of affairs on both sides of the Bidassoa was by no means such as to provoke one. The truth is that the royalist

party in Spain had sustained a great defeat, that most of its leaders were exiled from the country, and that the revolutionary government, encouraged by this success, was beginning to exhibit signs of moderation. Hence, not M. de Villèle alone, but the king also, appeared a good deal cooled down in his eagerness for the invasion, and expressed his fears, when the Duke saw him on the morrow, that the notes of the Allies, if sent forward, would only interrupt the good understanding which he was anxious to establish with his neighbours. The result was, a promise on M. de Villèle's part to communicate by special messenger with the plenipotentiaries at Verona, and to use his best endeavours to obtain a suspension of the course which had there been determined upon, if not a modification of the terms in which it was expressed.

It was evident, from all this, that the French ministry was by no means at one with itself. The views of M. de Villèle seemed to be a good deal more reasonable than those of his colleagues MM. de Montmorency and Chateaubriand. Still the Duke was not deceived. Something there evidently was beneath the surface, which had not yet been made clear to him; and by degrees it came out. On the 12th he saw M. de Toreno, the Spanish minister at the court of the Tuileries, and learned from him that the question of peace or war, as explained by M. de Villèle, did not depend upon any modification of the existing Spanish constitution; that France would leave that matter to be settled by the Spaniards as they themselves thought best, provided Spain would accept her mediation in the quarrel with the colonies, and consent to a separation by establishing a Bourbon monarchy in Mexico or Peru. On the other hand, both the king and M. de Villèle spoke to himself

only of the Spanish constitution. The latter, especially, expressed his desire to break up the army of observation, if he could do so with honour, and believed that it might be done if Spain would only yield in one not very important point. Neither he nor his master cared what plan of representation might be followed. All that they pressed for was, that Spain should so modify her system as to make the constitution emanate from the king, by resting it upon a royal charter, and not upon the will of the people. If this were done, and done in time for him to explain the case to the houses of parliament when they met on the 28th of January, everything else, every matter of arrangement in detail, would be left to the undisturbed management of the Spanish cabinet and Cortes.

While the promised messenger from the Tuileries was pursuing his journey to Verona, the Duke made a full report of all that had passed to Mr. Canning. He wrote also to Sir. W. A'Court, the English minister at Madrid, at once cautioning him to conceal from the Spanish cabinet the apparent eagerness of France for peace, and suggesting that now was the time to persuade Spain to solicit the mediation of England. Without such solicitation he was averse to renew the offer which France had rejected at Verona when it came from Prince Metternich. But Mr. Canning took a different view of the case. He instructed the Duke to deliver an official note to M. de Villèle, containing a direct offer from England to mediate; and the offer was, as his Grace expected that it would be, after a brief delay declined. At the same time, the king, M. de Villèle, and M. de Montmorency, all expressed themselves desirous that England should exercise her influence with Spain to bring her

government to reason; and they urged the Duke, even now, to sign the *procès-verbal.* The Duke asked, in his turn, whether upon his signing that document, France would at once break up the army of observation, send the Spanish refugees beyond the Garonne, and treat the instrument as one of a purely defensive import. He received, as indeed he anticipated that he should, an unsatisfactory answer, and he refused to sign the document.

It was impossible to draw from all this any other inference than one; viz., that the continental monarchies, and especially France, were overcharged with jealousy of England; that any measure, however wise and just in itself, if proposed by her, would be suspected; and that unless she was prepared to enter into a doubtful war of principles, there remained nothing more for her to do than to bring her diplomatic efforts to an end. For it had transpired in the course of his Grace's conferences with Louis XVIII. and his ministers, that the operations of the English cruisers in the Caribbean seas were viewed with suspicion; that their pursuit of pirates up the lagoons and into the islands adjacent to Cuba gave great offence, and that fears were entertained of her becoming mistress of Cuba itself, and even of Porto-Rico and other Spanish settlements. And France, his Grace was informed, could never consent to such an increase of British territory, even if it were made over to her as the price of her alliance by Spain. The Duke could only assure the French minister, that for accessions of territory in the Caribbean seas or elsewhere England had no wish; that she would not accept Cuba as a gift, were Spain to offer it; and that the project of selling her support to the Spanish government for such a price had never been

entertained either by England or by Spain. Finally, his Grace soon learned that M. de Villèle's application for delay to the congress at Verona had proved unsuccessful; and that Austria, Prussia, and Russia were determined to go forward with their project of interference in Spanish affairs, with or without the co-operation of France, as France might determine.

On the 20th of December the Duke quitted Paris, and early in Janary, 1823, he arrived in London. The correspondence of which he had heretofore been the medium, was thenceforth carried on between Mr. Canning and M. de Chateaubriand, who had succeeded M. de Montmorency at the French Foreign Office; and we are bound to add that whatever Mr. Canning's letters might gain in elegance of diction, they lost in the absence of that brevity and decision which characterised every written communication from the Duke of Wellington. Indeed the game became one of mere fence between two clever sophists. M. Chateaubriand endeavoured to show that the question at issue was not French: Mr. Canning demonstrated, as the Duke had done before him, that France had at all events made it her own, by the terms of the note which her representative had handed in at Verona. In the same spirit, the Duke's admission so long ago as 1820, that causes of war between France and Spain might arise, as for example, if the latter should invade the territory of the former, or endeavour to over-run Portugal, was tossed to and fro between them. The French minister contended, first, that Spain had actually invaded France, by sending bands of armed plunderers across the border; and next, that the same reasoning which applied to actual invasion was applicable to invasion threatened, or even intended. Mr. Canning denied that the acts of marauders could be

treated as those of the state, and derided the notion of indentity between a purpose meditated or assumed to be meditated, and the same purpose carried into effect. And so it was with regard to the moral contagion to which France, and indeed all Europe, was alleged to be exposed. Certainly the risk was there; but the question arising out of it resolved itself into one of probabilities, and on this head Mr. Canning declared himself against any attempt to stamp it out. "The Spirit of Revolution," he observed, "which, shut up within the Pyrences, might exhaust itself in struggles, trying, indeed to Spain, but harmless to her neighbours, if called forth from within these precincts by the provocation of foreign attack, might find perhaps in other countries fresh aliment for its fury, and might renew throughout Europe the misery of the five and twenty years which preceded the peace of 1815."

Probably there is no sane man now living, whether he be a native of France or of England, but will acknowledge, that reason and justice were, throughout this discussion, entirely on the side of the British government. Opposed to them, however, were the ties of family connection, considerable apprehension of disturbance at home, and a natural anxiety to restore to France her proper rank among the great military powers. And these took the place with M. de Chateaubriand, of the moral force which was wanting to his argument. Now though England felt that she had done her duty, that the war which threatened Spain was one which could not possibly affect her, and in which she was resolved to take no part, it was determined, on the suggestion of the Duke of Wellington, to make a last effort to avert it. France and Spain had

equally declined mediation; yet as France had been persuaded to suspend her military operations, so Spain, it was hoped, might even yet be prevailed upon to make of her own accord such concessions as should satisfy her somewhat unreasonable neighbour. Accordingly Lord Fitzroy Somerset, the Duke's military secretary throughout the late war, and his attendant at Verona, was directed to proceed to Madrid, and to put himself in communication with as many of his old companions in arms as might be disposed to listen with deference to the sentiments of their former chief. Lord Fitzroy went, not as an ambassador, but as a private person, and he carried with him a paper drawn up by the Duke, in which his Grace's views of what Spain might and ought to do under circumstances so critical were laid down. The memorandum is brief and very characteristic, and we accordingly give it in full:—

"It is important to make the Spaniards feel first, that they cannot get rid of their king without exciting the indignation, hatred, and enmity of all Europe, and that all concerned in his deposition or murder will undoubtedly suffer for it; and secondly, that a king being necessary for the government of their country, and a part of their system, as established by themselves, it follows as a matter of equal necessity, that the powers and prerogatives assigned to the king in the system, should be such as to enable him to perform his duties, and such as in reason a king ought to be satisfied with.

"If the situation of the king is not what it ought to be, if he has not the power to protect himself and those employed under him, in the performance of their duty in the service of the public, and if the king has not reason to be satisfied that the power allotted to

him by the law is sufficient, the country will never be in a state of tranquillity, be the system of government what it may. There will be successive insurrections in one part of the country or the other. The king and his government will be a never-ceasing object of jealousy and distrust, and sooner or later the catastrophe will happen, which all good men deprecate. But not only is internal tranquillity impossible as long as this system lasts, but it renders foreign war and invasion certain.

"The family connections between his Catholic Majesty and the king of France, the interest which the latter naturally feels for the welfare of the former, which the desire to re-establish the French influence in Spain will constantly induce him to manifest, will occasion a perpetual irritation between the two countries, as long as the situation of the king in Spain is not what it ought to be, which it may be expected will sooner or later occasion war, and the successful invasion of the weaker country.

"Thus then those Spaniards who really desire the peace and welfare of their country must look to an alteration of their constitution, which shall have for its object to give the king the power of executing his office. I confess that I do not see any objection to this alteration, either in the antecedent conduct of the king, or in the apprehension that his Catholic Majesty will abuse the power thus confided to him. The king will feel the advantages of the position in which he shall find himself, and will have no motive for wishing to overthrow the system established, particularly if the alteration is made in concert with him; and moreover, the spirit of the people, and the exertions of those individuals who have prevented the existing system from

being overthrown, will preserve that to be established even though the king should be desirous of overthrowing it, by the abuse of the power intrusted to him.

"This will be the case particularly, if the proposed alterations of the system are concerted with the king. Indeed no other mode of making those alterations can have the desired effect, as if they are not made in concert with the king, his Catholic Majesty will not cordially carry into execution the system proposed, and both king and people being dissatisfied, there will still be the same causes for internal disturbance and for external war as exist at present.

"The concert with the king on the alterations must be a real one, and the king must be satisfied that the constitution as altered will secure the foundations of his power and of the executive government, and will give him the means of protecting himself and his servants. Neither do I see any reason for deferring to make these alterations in the recent transactions of foreign powers. Those transactions are all defensive. France, by her army of observation, professes to be on the defensive, and that she will not pass the frontier excepting on the occurrence of certain cases. The alteration of the constitution on the principles proposed would render those cases so improbable, as that the continuance of the army of observation would be a useless expense, and there is no doubt that it would be withdrawn.

"Then another advantage which would result from this alteration in aid of internal tranquillity is, that France would most probably adopt some efficient measure to prevent the assembling of the royalists within the French frontier. All Spaniards who pass the frontier might be ordered to reside at such a distance from the frontier as to render their intrigues or

their operations within the Spanish frontier nearly impossible. And thus the asylum given in France to persons of this description would not be inconsistent with the peace and tranquillity of Spain.

"But this is not all. The Spaniards must see that all the sources of the prosperity of their country are nearly destroyed, and that the very foundations of social order and government are in a state of risk. There is no trade, no private or public revenue: the national property cannot be sold, the interest of the national debt cannot be paid, nor can the army, or any of the public servants or establishments, and no more money can be borrowed.

"I happen to know that the principal money people in Europe will not lend their money to Spain till they shall see a system prevail in that country which shall afford some hope of the re-establishment and permanence of peace and good order. If all this be true — if it be true besides, that the best chance Spain has of coming to some arrangement with her revolted colonies, is to be found in some settlement of her internal dissensions and distractions—it is impossible that any reasonable Spaniard can doubt, that the time is come, at which a great effort should be made to effect those alterations, which the common sense of mankind points out to be necessary."

Had the public mind at Madrid been in a state of less irritation, it is probable the Duke's advice would have been followed. It is certain that of those to whom Lord Fitzroy submitted the paper just quoted, all professed themselves satisfied with its contents, but to a man they added, that the minister or member of Cortes

who should at that moment endeavour to act upon his Grace's suggestions, would pay the penalty of his rashness with his life. This was especially the opinion of General Alava, whose personal attachment to the Duke could not be doubted, and who, more perhaps than any other leader of the constitutional party, was inclined to support the royal prerogative. For already the representatives of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, had read their notes to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who at once submitted them to the Cortes, and handed in replies worthy of a proud people, had the people really been united and physically capable of maintaining their rights with the sword. Nor were the relations between France and Spain ameliorated by what took place at the same time. The French minister read his note, as the representatives of the other powers had read theirs; and though he was answered in a strain of greater courtesy, the matter of the reply to his communication was equally firm; for it contained, among other things, a demand that France would break up at once that army which she had collected on her southern frontier, and which Spain could not regard in any other light than as a menace to herself. Lord Fitzroy's letters to the Duke and to Mr. Canning, were not therefore of a cheering kind, and the passage of a few days sufficed to dispel whatever hope of an amicable settlement might yet linger in their minds. On the 28th of January the king of France opened the Chambers with a speech, the purport of which could not be misunderstood. It spoke of 100,000 French soldiers as prepared to march under a prince of the blood, for the deliverance of Ferdinand VII. and his loyal people from the tyranny of a faction, and within little more than a month the march began.

CHAP. VI.

FRENCH INVASION OF SPAIN.—STATE OF THE CABINET.—MR. CANNING SHIFTY.—GRADUAL CHANGE OF COMMERCIAL POLICY.—ITS RESULTS.—STATE OF IRELAND.—RISE OF THE CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION.—ITS DEMANDS.—THE DUKE OF YORK'S DECLARATION.

1823–25.

HISTORY has recorded in what manner the events alluded to at the close of the last chapter reacted upon England and the rest of the civilised world. The march of the French army from the Bidassoa to Madrid was one continued triumph, and a brief siege compelled the revolutionary government of Spain to set the king at liberty, and to open the gates of Cadiz. In Portugal, also, a counter-revolution began, which, unaided by foreign bayonets, overthrew the Cortes, and restored to the crown its old influence in the state. These results, little calculated upon either by the ministers or the opposition, produced general discontent in England. It was to no purpose that the ministry, by suspending an order in council, enabled British merchants to pour large supplies both of arms and ammunition into Spain. The Spanish people proved to be little enthusiastic for liberal institutions, and the few Englishmen who crossed the sea for the purpose of awakening this feeling, returned in due time, mortified, but still unconvinced. Accordingly, when parliament met, there was a fierce onslaught on the government, and especially upon the Duke, as its

representative at the Congress of Verona. The attack in the Upper House was led by Lord Ellenborough, and supported in long speeches by Lord Holland and Earl Grey. The Duke's defence of himself was masterly. He pointed out that he had been sent to Verona, not to fight for abstract principles, but to communicate the line of policy which the cabinet had determined to follow. He replied to the charge of having been too guarded in his language, by asking, "Whether it would be becoming in one who appeared in the character of a mediator to employ threats, especially if he had no power to carry them into effect?" As to his having approved originally of the assembling of a French army of observation on the frontier, to what did it amount? To this and no more,—that with a civil war raging along her frontier, which necessarily exposed every town and village near to insult and injury, France had a perfect right to guard her own material interests; and he defied any reasonable man, be his political prejudices what they might, to assert the contrary. "But," continued he, "the noble baron who quoted that part of my note, has forgotten by some accident or another, to allude to the very next paragraph. I will supply what he has left out. 'His Britannic Majesty wishes that this measure may be effectual in attaining the object for which it is calculated, and that the wisdom of the French government will have induced them to explain it at Madrid in such terms as will satisfy the government of his Catholic Majesty of its necessity.'"

Following up this hit, the Duke went on to state, that he had received no instructions to insult the illustrious individuals assembled at the Congress of

Verona; and that he was commissioned to address himself, not to the people of England, but to independent sovereigns and their representatives, whom he might advise, but to whom he had no right to dictate. He next desired to be informed what the noble lords would have had him do. Were they for a policy of peace, or a policy of war? If for the former, could he go farther than declare, that to any violent attack on the independence of Spain, the king his master would be no party? If for the latter, all he had to say was, that he entirely differed from them; and he believed that his views would be supported by all the intelligent portion of the community."

Adverting next to the success which attended his efforts to defer, if he could not stop, the rupture, he showed that, by sending Lord Fitzroy Somerset to speak privately to individual members of the Spanish cabinet and Cortes, he had acted in the fairest and most friendly manner towards both France and Spain. The concessions which he had recommended the latter power to make were, even by the showing of the noble lords opposite, not unreasonable; and he conscientiously believed that, had they been made, even at the last moment, the soil of Spain would have escaped violation.

The Duke's speech, which for him was a long one, made a great impression upon the House. His phraseology might not always be the most correct of which the English language is capable, but his reasoning was clear, consecutive, and sound, and his final declaration that upon the statements now made he rested his defence, not only before the country, but before Europe and the civilised world, was met with cheers from the opposition, as well as from the ministerial benches.

Yet it may be doubted, after all, whether his heart was in the work, either at Verona or in London. Of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 he had never professed to be an admirer, and still less could he approve of the proceedings of the dominant faction which, in 1822, over-rode that constitution. It appeared, too, from his manner of expressing himself in private, that he anticipated no serious resistance to France, provided she struck boldly and rapidly. To such as expressed a desire that the Duke d'Angoulême would move with deliberation, and endeavour to gain over the Spanish people by friendly manifestoes, his answer was — "There are no manifestoes like cannon and musketry. If the French push on they will reach Madrid probably without a check; if they take Madrid, and drive the Constitutionalists into Cadiz, the game will soon be their own; if they waste time in telling the Spanish people that they come as deliverers, the chances are that the Spaniards will be provoked to rise as one man, and to tell them that they don't want foreign deliverers, but prefer managing their own affairs in their own way." Hence, when the campaign came to an end, and France declared herself willing to withdraw from Spain as soon as King Ferdinand would permit, he did not hesitate to express his personal acquiescence in the turn which affairs had taken, and to give it as his opinion, that the continental nations should for the future be left, as much as possible, to settle their own differences and to establish their own forms of government. It was not so with the new Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Canning, mortified at the slight which he considered himself to have received, and not unaware that he was an object of jealousy to the Great

Powers, pressed upon Lord Liverpool's administration a policy the wisdom of which has hardly been made manifest by time. Restrained from defending Spain, he made up his mind to weaken her by formally acknowledging the independence of her revolted colonies, and taking credit to himself for effecting that which the colonies had, in point of fact, effected for themselves, he declared in parliament, amid the cheers of the opposition, "Contemplating Spain such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved that, if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."

Mr. Canning's speech was much lauded at the time, and has often been quoted since. Yet it was a mere piece of sophistry from first to last; for no one knew better than Mr. Canning himself that, whatever might be the value to the revolted colonies of the settlement by Great Britain of consular agents among them (and nothing more followed immediately upon the delivery of this speech), that course he had resolved to take, whether Spain were invaded by France or not. Neither was this fact hidden from the Duke of Wellington, whose confidence in Mr. Canning, never very great, became day by day less settled. For the sake of Lord Liverpool, however, whom he much esteemed, and because it was still in his power to keep the balance of parties even, his Grace refrained from bringing the differences between them to an issue. Canning communicated confidentially, as was his wont, with the opponents, as well as with the friends of the ministry, and the Duke kept the peace by quietly counteracting such movements, and by going with him, as far as his con-

science would allow, in a liberalised policy both at home and abroad.

And here it may not be out of place to observe, that to the respect in which the Duke was held by his colleagues and the king, Mr. Canning was mainly indebted for the high position to which he attained in the government. To the king, as is well known, he had long been personally obnoxious: while Lords Eldon, Sidmouth, and the section to which they belonged, entertained a rooted dislike to him; yet the Duke, taking part with Lord Liverpool, pressed him upon the cabinet. In the state of parties, as it then existed, the arrangement was not only judicious, but in some sort inevitable; yet the results were, in many respects, unsatisfactory. Great in the House of Commons, Canning was shifty and uncertain in the cabinet. He scarcely disguised his jealousy of the influence which had placed him where he was, and began immediately to aim at undermining it. He first acquired a perfect ascendency over the weaker mind of Lord Liverpool, and turned it to account. He next addressed himself to a royal favourite whom Lady Londonderry had refused to conciliate, and he succeeded by these means in removing some of the prejudices which stood in his way at the palace. There followed upon this an attempt, not unsuccessful, to fill place after place in the government with personal friends of his own. Lord Francis Cunningham became a Lord of the Treasury, Lord Maryborough, the Duke's brother, ceased to be Master of the Mint, and Mr. Huskisson took his place. Other changes ensued in due course. Mr. Vansittart was created Lord Bexley, and accepted the Duchy of Lancaster in order that Mr. Frederick Robinson might become Chancellor of the Exchequer;

while Lord Sidmouth, who had already handed over the seals of the Home Office to Mr. Peel, retired into private life. Meanwhile, the Grenvillites, who had little in common with the party either of Mr. Canning or of the Lord Chancellor, supplied their quota to this mosaic government. Mr. Charles Wynn became secretary to the Board of Control. Mr. William Freemantle obtained a lordship of the treasury, and the Marquis of Buckingham was conciliated by achieving the great object of his ambition, his elevation to a dukedom.

It would not be easy to conceive a state of things much less satisfactory than all this; for there was not one section in the cabinet which felt entire confidence in any other. Canning, Huskisson, Robinson, with their followers, advocated a line of policy, at home and abroad, of advanced liberalism. They were supporters of the Catholic claims, favoured the entire repeal of restrictions upon commerce, and were desirous of pressing constitutional governments upon all the nations of the world. Diametrically opposed to the Canningites, in every point of view, were the ministers of what may be called the old tory party; viz., Lord Eldon, Lord Westmoreland, Lord Bathurst, and perhaps Mr. Peel. We say perhaps, for whatever Mr. Peel's prejudices might have been in 1822–23, they underwent before long great modification. These statesmen were opposed to any further concessions to the Roman Catholics. They deprecated interference with the established laws affecting trade and navigation; and they looked with disfavour on every attempt made on the continent of Europe to give to the people a voice in the management of their own affairs. And lastly, there were the Gren-

villites, liberal as regarded the laws against Roman Catholics, but indifferent, to say the least, on questions of commercial policy, and by no means disposed to risk old alliances for the sake of giving constitutions to foreign states.

It has been commonly supposed that the Duke of Wellington threw the weight of his influence into the scale of the old tories. This is a great mistake: The Duke had no objection on principle, provided he saw his way clearly before him, to repeal the disqualifying enactments which shut out the king's Roman Catholic subjects from parliament and from places of trust and authority in the state; and on questions of trade and navigation, his mind was only so far made up, that he desired to preserve for England her traditionary superiority at sea, and to maintain the landed aristocracy as the preponderating influence in the state. But he had no objection to consider impartially any question which other members of the cabinet might bring forward, and as the event showed, he was willing to relax the commercial code as far as might be considered safe and expedient. In like manner, his principle towards foreign powers was one of rigid non-intervention. He held that it was no part of England's duty, either to foster popular movements on the one hand, or on the other to assist the continental sovereigns in repressing them; and he was particularly averse to take a side in civil contests, whether these might arise from the claims of rival dynasties in Europe, or be produced by the quarrels of European states with their colonies in other quarters of the world.

Less bigoted on the religious question than Lord Liverpool, yet more disinclined to be carried away by

the impetuosity of Canning, he acted as a sort of referee or mediator in many a ministerial dispute; and his task was the more difficult, that the King not only had his own views of things often at variance with the decisions of his cabinet, but that, with excessive wrongheadedness, he was in the habit of intriguing for their accomplishment, as well with the leaders of the opposition as with individual ministers on whom he felt that he could make an impression. The effect upon a man so highminded as the Duke was such, that over and over again he thought seriously of letting things take their course. Indeed, it was only a strong sense of duty which restrained him from breaking up the government by retiring from it. For on one point his convictions were settled. He did not believe that the Whigs, as a party, were strong enough to conduct the government, except by forcing on measures which must lead to a radical change in the principles of the constitution; and as he entertained a nervous apprehension of such changes, of which he had seen the fatal results in continental states, he kept his place in the cabinet, where he urged upon his colleagues the necessity of bearing with one another, and of making all possible concessions, rather than allow power to pass into hands which would inevitably abuse it.

Such were the circumstances under which began that change of policy in commercial affairs which ended, as it was manifest from the first that sooner or later it must of necessity do, in the establishment of free trade. It was the cabinet of which the Duke of Wellington was a member, and Lord Liverpool at the head, which substituted for the ancient navigation laws of Cromwell and Charles II. a system of reciprocity—in other words,

which permitted the import and export of goods in foreign bottoms on condition that foreign states would agree to confer similar privileges on British shipping. The same cabinet it was which struck a blow at protection to native industry by lowering the duties on foreign commodities, whether of luxury or necessity; and that too without stipulating for any corresponding advantages for British manufactures. And then followed the repeal of laws long held to be essential to the country's greatness: as, for example, those against the export of machinery and the emigration of skilled artisans, as well as the acts which empowered magistrates to interfere in cases of strikes or combinations among workmen, and summarily to punish such as took part in them. It is true that the corn laws were still retained, as well as the statutes which guarded by differential duties the productions of our own colonies from the rivalry of foreign states. But these were mere exceptions to the general rule—that in commercial transactions it is true wisdom to purchase in the cheapest market, and to sell in the dearest. Who then shall undertake to say that the stream having been fairly turned into this channel, it would not have flowed on till, without any such convulsion as the Reform Bill of 1832, it had swept away the last remnants of a policy of restrictions? Be this however as it may, the fact that he was a consenting party to these great changes proves that, however averse he might be to revolutionise the political influences of his own country, and to force constitutional governments on nations not yet capable of appreciating them, the Duke was not the bigoted supporter of things as they were which his political opponents,

and some even of his friends, represent him to have been.

The success which attended these fiscal arrangements appeared to be boundless. The exports and imports of the empire increased largely, and money became at the same time so abundant that capitalists in Great Britain were at a loss how to employ it. After exhausting every tangible means of remunerative speculation at home, scheme after scheme was taken up for developing the resources of other countries. Among these the working of the silver mines of South America obtained special favour. Companies were formed, mines hired, machinery purchased and sent out under the care of agents not always conversant with their business; and large returns were promised, and for a while expected. In a word, the interval between the autumn of 1823 and the winter of 1825 may justly be considered as one of the most stirring in the commercial history of England, while the government, which obtained credit for having inaugurated a system so full of promise, became popular to an extent unknown in modern times.

That all this was hollow the ministers themselves appear to have suspected, and the event proved that they were right. Yet they traded on the reputation which public opinion had awarded them, and would have been, so far as home politics were concerned, much at their ease, had the state of Ireland permitted. But no measures which had yet been devised, appeared to operate any permanent improvement in that country. The truth is, that public men, at the period of which we are speaking, overlooked, or failed to discover, the real causes of Ireland's discontent. One party attributed to political oppression, evils which had their origin in

social mismanagement. The other, jealous of the ascendency of law, forgot, that when a whole people is plunged in the depths of physical distress, the law has no terrors for them. Hence the zeal with which, on the one hand, Catholic emancipation was advocated, and the sturdy determination, on the other, to maintain what was called Protestant ascendancy; as if the mere settlement of that question, for or against the Roman Catholics, could have affected, for good or evil, a nation sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance and pauperism.

The wants of Ireland, in 1823, were exactly those which the hand of God, more pointedly than the wisdom of man, has since removed, at least in part. Her aristocracy was bankrupt, her energies paralysed, her commerce stagnant. She could boast of no manufactures, except in the north, and a population terribly redundant existed, but could scarcely be said to live. The staple food of a cottier tenantry was the potato, which the lands, let and sub-let, till they reached the lowest point of occupancy, supplied, but never in excess. Hence a single bad harvest was invariably followed by distress, which, if the season continued unfavourable into a second year, produced a famine. Moreover, as there was no law which gave to the indigent a claim on their parishes against starvation, mendicancy became universal, or nearly so, among the humbler classes. After scratching up the earth and planting the potato in the plot of ground which surrounded their cabins, whole families went forth year by year to beg; or else they crossed the Channel at harvest time into England and Scotland, in the hope of earning there money enough to pay the exorbitant rents, for which they had made themselves liable. Meanwhile two rival churches, each

by a process of its own, wrung from this mendicant population the means of subsistence for their clergy. From the entire population, of which its members comprised one-sixth, the Established Church took tithes, and was aided by the law in doing so; while from four-and-a-half, out of the five remaining sixths, the Roman Catholic Church exacted fees quite as large in amount as the tithes; of which it enforced the payment by the application of threats more terrible than human law could hold out. Is it to be wondered at, if both burdens, but especially the former, were borne impatiently? For some time back, indeed, tithes could not be collected at all, except with the assistance of troops or of bodies of armed police; and now, encouraged by the success which had attended resistance to these payments, the tenantry were beginning to talk of resisting the payment of rents also.

The obvious remedies for evils such as these, are encouragement to emigration, a legal provision for the poor, a compulsory commutation of tithes, the introduction of capital into the country, and with it the establishment of manufactures, and of an improved system of agriculture. There must necessarily follow upon all this, such a pressure on the landlord class as would compel the needy to dispose of their estates, and transfer the property in the soil to men better able, and more willing, to improve it. As yet, however, visions of this sort seem scarcely to have entered into the minds of the most imaginative of our leading statesmen. A law was indeed passed, authorising landowners and tithe proprietors in Ireland to arrange between themselves, if so disposed, plans of commutation; which, when fully settled and registered, were to be binding on them and

on their successors.* But except in this particular, which as far as it went proved useful enough, no steps were taken to better the condition of the Irish people, who became in consequence an easy prey to every demagogue, possessed of the small measure of talent which was necessary to work upon their credulity and abuse it.

Among these there was one, whose success as an agitator has never been equalled in modern times, but who was either too wise or too wary to aim at a prouder name, by becoming the leader of a rebellion. Daniel O'Connell, after various preliminary experiments, succeeded in establishing the Catholic Association, and then brought, by means of it, the whole weight of the masses, headed by the priesthood, to bear upon one point. How the Society was constituted and worked, and to what end it was directed, it is not the business of this biography to explain. Enough is done when we state, that having taken too decided a tone at the outset, an act was passed through Parliament for its suppression, which was immediately followed by a formal dissolution of the body, and the organisation of a new one. And with such consummate skill and boldness was the new Society handled, that its leaders, while they kept all Ireland in a state of excitement, were themselves placed beyond the reach of interference by the government.

From this time forth the ingenuity of Lord Liver-

* The law in question—Mr. Goulburn's Act, was accepted by upwards of 1500 parishes; and so well and justly were the commutations settled, that only six appeals were made, of which four were dismissed, in one the amount of tithes was raised; and only in one lowered.

pool's cabinet was taxed to meet the difficulties of a case which has scarcely a parallel in history. It could not be said that Ireland was in a state of insurrection, because the people, though completely organised, professed nothing but loyalty to the throne. Here and there, indeed, individuals were forced to give up their holdings, while houses were broken into, and arms and ammunition carried off. But outrages of this sort were of old standing, nor could the government entertain greater abhorrence of them than was expressed by Mr. O'Connell, and his subordinate agents in the movement.

Meanwhile the Protestant section of the Irish community was not idle. Complaining that their rulers had deserted them, they combined for self-defence, and through their Orange lodges, held language quite as determined as that of the Catholic Association. Though in point of numbers inconsiderable, as compared with their rivals, they possessed by far the larger share of the property, and almost all the political influence of the country. Hence every effort made to conciliate, or even to deal fairly by the Roman Catholics, brought down upon the government the hostility of the Orangemen. While the promotion of an Orangeman to place, or even his friendly reception at the Viceregal Court, exasperated the Roman Catholic mind, and called forth volumes of abuse from its great director.

Ever since the passing of the Act of Union there had been bitter complaints on the part of the Irish Roman Catholics, that faith was not kept with them. These were little attended to during the wars of the French Revolution; but the return of peace gave men time and opportunity to remember that Mr. Pitt, when proposing the Union, had proposed at the same time to pay the

Romish clergy out of the Consolidated Fund, and to place the Roman Catholic laity on a footing of political equality with the Protestants. Year after year a motion was made to repeal the laws which bore oppressively upon the Romanists and one by one the strictly penal statutes either fell into disuse or were swept away. At the period of which we are now writing, there remained only one enactment which, by imposing a particular form of oath upon them, hindered peers and commoners from sitting and voting in either house of Parliament, and from holding certain offices under the crown. This enactment was spoken of as a disqualifying law, and strenuous efforts were made to get rid of it. They failed for a time, majorities in both houses declaring against the repeal. But on each successive division the majorities in the Commons became less decided, till in the end the opponents of what was called Catholic emancipation found themselves in a minority. The hope of the Protestant party was thenceforth fixed on the House of Lords, and it did not fail them; though even there public opinion showed symptoms of wavering, which grew more and more manifest as sons succeeded to their fathers, and new names were added to the list of the peerage.

So matters proceeded till 1824, when the Emancipation Bill was carried by so large a majority in the Commons, that it became a serious question with the cabinet whether it would not be an act of prudence to give way in the Lords. Of this policy the Canningites and Grenvillites had long been the advocates, and they now brought forward a plan which was in some respects as startling as it was comprehensive. They proposed not only to repeal the law which affected the

Roman Catholic laity, but to grant endowments to the clergy, and to establish, in Ireland, a system of general and mixed education. The very extent of the demand ensured its rejection. For as the king was known to be averse to concession in any form, they who professed to be of the King's party in the cabinet refused to lay before him a scheme, which they could not conscientiously recommend for his adoption.

Nothing daunted by this, the friends of Catholic emancipation pursued their own course, and in 1825 the danger, as it was considered, to the constitution appeared so great, that the Duke of York, then heir presumptive to the throne, thought it not unbecoming to make his celebrated declaration on the subject. It was, as the probable sovereign of the empire at no distant day rather than as a peer of the realm, that His Royal Highness declared himself against all concession; ending with the remarkable words: "These are the principles to which I will adhere, and which I will maintain, and that up to the latest moment of my existence, whatever may be my situation in life; so help me God."

However gratifying to Lord Eldon and to that large section in the community which shared his views, such an announcement might be, coming as it did at such a time, and from such a quarter, it shocked and offended, not the avowed advocates of emancipation alone, but all moderate men who felt that in a constitutional country like this, it is neither safe nor fitting, in one who is placed next the throne, to pledge himself beforehand to any particular line of policy. The King, anti-catholic as he was, made no secret of his indignation, which was, however, grounded rather on selfish than on national considerations; and the Duke of Wellington

spoke of the proceeding as a blunder. For its sole effect was to exasperate angry feeling on both sides, by raising in the extreme Protestant party a confidence which had no foundation in fact, while the Romanists were taught by it more and more to dissociate the hope of attaining the great object of their wishes from a principle of loyalty to the throne.

CHAP. VII.

THE DUKE'S ILLNESS.—MR. STEVENSON TREATS HIM FOR DEAFNESS.—THE AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL AND OF RUSSIA.—MR. CANNING'S EXPEDITION TO PORTUGAL.—THE DUKE'S MISSION TO ST. PETERSBURG.

1825-26.

AMONG other peculiarities incident to the Duke's strongly marked character, there was one which occasioned from time to time a good deal of anxiety to his friends. He seemed to claim an exemption from the ordinary physical infirmities of human nature. Sickness, for example, no matter in what cause originating, he regarded as something which ought to be concealed. It was a sign of weakness of which he was ashamed, and which he would scarcely acknowledge even to the medical men who attended him. In 1823, when on a visit to the Marquis of Hertford, he was attacked with inflammation, which gave way only to profuse bleeding, and left great weakness behind. He could not deny the fact that he had been ill—but he scouted the idea that there was the slightest danger; or that any serious inconvenience had occurred through his illness to himself or to others. In 1824, cholera, not in a very mild form, attacked him, and its effects were long seen in his wasted frame and emaciated countenance. He never would allow that he had suffered from more than a slight derangement of the stomach. Wind, rain, hail, snow, could not keep him back from the discharge of the commonest ceremonial duties. He would appear

at guard mountings or reviews in the full-dress costume of the season, whatever it might be ; while all around him were cloaked and wrapped up against the weather. Hence they who wrote or spoke to him about some malady under which it was known that he had been labouring, never got a more explicit acknowledgment than this,—"I was a little out of sorts, but I'm all right now;" or, "I tried to bully a cold, but it beat me." And yet from 1823 up to 1826, and even later, everybody looked upon him as a dying man, so wasted was he by repeated illnesses, to which he would not give way, and over which, probably, by the sheer force of his will, he ultimately triumphed.

And here it may not be out of place if we make mention of a circumstance, which not only illustrates the fact of which we are now speaking, but brings prominently into view both the kindness of the Duke's nature, and his shrinking aversion to the very appearance of deceit. He had become partially deaf in one ear, and felt impatient under the affliction. All the legitimate skill and science in London was called on to remove the infirmity, but without effect. At last, Mr. Stevenson, the celebrated aurist, was recommended to the Duke as one who had been eminently successful in similar cases. The Duke sent for him. After trying, to no purpose, a less energetic method of treatment, Mr. Stevenson had recourse to his great remedy, viz. the injection by a syringe into the ear of a strong solution of caustic. "I don't think," the Duke used to say, "that I ever suffered so much in my life. It was not pain, it was something far worse. The sense of hearing became so acute, that I wished myself stone deaf. The noise of a carriage passing along the street

was like the loudest thunder, and everybody that spoke seemed to be shrieking at the very top of his voice." We are not prepared to assign a reason for this unlooked-for result of an experiment which had succeeded in many other instances; we only know the fact, and that the Duke, as was his wont, bore it all without manifesting any token that he was uncomfortable. He went out and came in as usual, and when he retired to bed, none of his household suspected that there was anything wrong with him.

By great good fortune Dr. Hume, his friend and family physician, who happened to be in attendance for other reasons, called next morning about eleven o'clock. He was shown into the Duke's room, and found his Grace sitting at the table, unshaved and unwashed, with blood-shot eyes and a flushed cheek, and observed that when he rose he staggered like a drunken man. His whole appearance, indeed, to use Dr. Hume's expression, "was that of one who had not yet recovered from a terrible debauch." Now, as Hume knew perfectly well that his illustrious patient never committed such debauches, he became greatly alarmed, and expressed himself so. "I fancy there is something wrong with my ear," was the Duke's reply; "I wish you would look at it." Hume did look at it. A furious inflammation was going on, which, had it been permitted to run its course for another hour, must have reached the brain. Hume ordered his Grace immediately to bed, and sent off for Sir Henry Halford and Sir Astley Cooper. Vigorous remedies were at once applied, and the inflammation was arrested. But the sense of hearing on that side of the head was destroyed for ever.

We must not omit the sequel to this little tale. The grief and mortification of Mr. Stevenson when he heard of the results of his practice knew no bounds. He hastened to Apsley House, and being admitted to the Duke's presence, expressed himself as any right-minded person, under the circumstances, would have done. But he was instantly stopped, though in the kindest manner,—"Don't say a word about it; you acted for the best; it has been unfortunate, no doubt, for both of us, but you are not at all to blame."

Grateful for this reception, Mr. Stevenson went on to say: "But it will be the ruin of me. Nobody will employ me any more, when they hear that I have been the cause of such suffering and danger to your Grace." "Why should they hear anything about it?" replied the Duke; "keep your own counsel, and depend upon it I won't say a word to any one." "Then your Grace will allow me to attend you as usual, which will show them that you have not withdrawn your confidence from me." "No," replied the Duke, still kindly but firmly; "I can't do that, for that would be a lie." So strong, even in a case which made no common appeal to his generosity, was the Duke's love of truth. He would not act a falsehood any more than he would speak one. Let us not, however, fail to do Mr. Stevenson's memory the same justice which the Duke did to his professional character while he lived. "It was not his fault," his Grace used to say. "He distinctly warned me that if I felt any uneasiness in the ear I must get cupped at once; and I said, 'Very well.' But I never was cupped in my life. I never thought more about it, and so, I suppose, the inflammation had time to run on."

The Duke underwent this operation because he was in a hurry to get rid of his deafness, in consequence of a duty which had been imposed upon him, the importance of which will scarcely be understood without a few words of preliminary explanation.

There occurred about the period at which we have arrived two events on the continent of Europe which not only affected the policy of the cabinet of which the Duke was a member, but gave to the Duke himself, both at the moment and subsequently, a good deal of uneasiness. We allude to the deaths of Don John VI., King of Portugal, and of Alexander the Emperor of all the Russias. The death of Don John, which occurred on the 15th of March, 1826, led, as is well known, to the formal severance of her important South American provinces from the kingdom of Portugal. Already, in 1825, the national independence of Brazil had been acknowledged, and an arrangement made which, while it secured to Don John for his lifetime the imperial title, devolved all power, as well as the right of succession to the throne of that empire, upon his eldest son Don Pedro. The deed which settled these matters was, to be sure, so worded that it seemed to leave to Don Pedro a right of choice between the thrones of Portugal and Brazil. But it may be questioned whether it gave him authority to exercise dominion for a single day over both realms. Had he selected the crown of Portugal he would have assumed his place at once among the crowned heads of Europe, and been assured of a quiet reign over a people attached to his family as well as satisfied with the institutions under which they lived. But to counterbalance this, there was the apprehension of danger to the stability of the Brazilian

throne, which had hardly existed long enough to bear, without being shaken by it, the inconvenience of a protracted minority. For though the Brazilians, having had the court some time resident among them, accepted readily enough a constitutional form of government, with an emperor at its head, there was no reason to believe that they were so deeply imbued with a love for monarchy in the abstract, as to continue deaf, under the disadvantages of an infant sovereign and a regent, to the enticements of that republicanism which they saw dominant in all other parts of the American continent. Again, Don Pedro was desirous, since he could not keep the two crowns united, to knit them together as much as possible by the bonds of a family alliance. He resolved, therefore, after mature deliberation, to retain the throne of Brazil for himself, and to seat on that of Portugal his eldest daughter, then a child of nine years of age.

As we have just said, it is a question for casuists to determine how far, under the circumstances, Don Pedro had any right to make these arrangements. The royal decree of 1825, which established the political divorce between the two states, is very simple. It declares that the empire of Brazil and the kingdom of Portugal had become, *ipso facto*, independent of each other; and appoints, in explicit terms, Don Pedro to the sovereignty of the former. But it gives no authority to Don Pedro to decide who shall, or who shall not, succeed to the throne of the latter. Don Pedro, however, either overlooking that fact, or believing that greater good was to be effected by ignoring than by attending to it, so far assumed the government of both, that he drew up a charter for the state, in the affairs of which he was

never more to interfere, and appointed a sovereign to reign over it. The charter was based upon that granted to the Brazilians, with this constitutional difference, that it recognised the existence of an hereditary peerage, having a right to a separate chamber in the legislature; while the sovereign was his daughter, Donna Maria da Gloria, during whose minority the Princess Donna Isabella, the emperor's sister, was to act as regent.

The publication of this decree produced at first no violent sensation one way or another in Portugal. Donna Isabella had already, before the demise of her father, succeeded to the regency, and she now continued to administer the affairs of the kingdom in the name of her niece. The constitution, on the whole a rational and sound one, appeared to give general satisfaction, and for some little time all "went merry as a marriage bell."

It would have been strange, however, if the Portuguese nation had rested quite satisfied with the changes thus brought about. The acknowledgment of the independence of Brazil was little approved of in any circle. Mercantile men had no desire to give up the monopoly of trade with that country which had formerly been secured to them. The pride of the old nobility was wounded by what they regarded as the dismemberment of the monarchy. With the constitution, notwithstanding the ascendency which it secured to the Roman Catholic religion, the priesthood was for the most part dissatisfied; and Don Miguel, the emperor's younger brother, from his place of honourable exile at Vienna, fomented the spirit of discontent at the very moment when he was expressing in letters to the princess regent his hearty concurrence in the arrange-

ments which had been made. The result was a mutiny by-and-by in several regiments, and a rising in various quarters against the constitution. Don Miguel was proclaimed absolute king, and a civil war began.

It soon became apparent that at this time, at least, the constitutional party in Portugal was the strongest. Don Miguel's adherents were worsted, and retired into Spain. Their reception there was not such as might have been expected from a state on friendly terms with the Portuguese government. They were neither deprived of their arms nor sent into the interior; but, being supplied with all things necessary for their subsistence as a military body, they were allowed to gather in recruits from whatever quarters they might be disposed to come. It is just to add, that to this breach of international law France appears to have been no party. Her troops, no doubt, still continued to hold certain important military positions in Spain; and Ferdinand, under the protection which they afforded him, was enabled in this and other matters to follow the bent of his own inclinations. But there is nothing to show that the French ambassador either prompted or encouraged him to take a side in the quarrel between the absolutist and liberal parties in the neighbouring kingdom. Great Britain, on the other hand, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, all professed to be satisfied with the dispositions which Don Pedro had made. Indeed, Austria went so far as to refuse to Don Miguel his passports except on the condition that he would not make use of them to visit Portugal.

It was under these circumstances, that the absolutists having increased their numbers, and being joined, surreptitiously or otherwise, by a handful of Spanish

cavalry, renewed their attempt to overturn the Portuguese government. A larger measure of success attended them on this than on the previous occasion, and an uneasy feeling began to manifest itself in the capital. Upon this the Regency appealed to the court of St. James's for the assistance, which by ancient treaty England is bound to afford, whenever Portugal shall be attacked by a foreign enemy. We are far from wishing to insinuate that the British cabinet overstepped the limits of right in acceding to this demand. When one nation gives shelter to political fugitives from another, and enables them to arm and equip themselves within her frontier, she lays herself open to the charge of conniving, to say the least of it, at their hostile purposes; and if she permit her own subjects, no matter in what minute numbers, to arm with them, she becomes indirectly, if not directly, a party to the consequences of such armament, whatever these may be. Of both offences against international law Spain was undeniably guilty; and she supplied thereby to the Portuguese government a fair pretext for appealing to England, and to England a ready excuse for listening to the appeal. Still when the whole truth comes to be told, it will probably appear that the motive which guided the councils of England on that occasion, was scarcely an unmixed and chivalrous regard to the faith of treaties. There was an active section in the cabinet, which seized with readiness the opportunity to avenge what it felt, or fancied to be, the slights recently put upon England by France and Spain. This party had been restrained from opposing with arms the march of the Duc d'Angoulême upon Cadiz; and it was resolved that a similar triumph over

liberal opinions should not be achieved at Lisbon. Hence the application of the Princess Regent, through her representative, to the English Minister for Foreign Affairs, was at once responded to; and a meeting of the cabinet being called, the colleagues of the Foreign Minister were induced, willingly or unwillingly, to redeem the pledge which he had already given.

Parliament was sitting at the time. It had been called together, after a dissolution, in November for the purpose of meeting the difficulties consequent upon a terrible commercial crisis, which was aggravated by something not far short of a famine in Ireland, and in Scotland. The crop of oats had failed, and a bill was just passed for the admission of foreign corn on the payment of a low duty, when on the 11th of December, both houses were startled by receiving a message from the King, to the effect that "an earnest application had been received by his Majesty from the Princess Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity subsisting between his Majesty and the crown of Portugal, his Majesty's aid against a hostile aggression from Spain; that repeated assurances had been given by the king of France that he would neither commit, nor allow to be committed, any hostile act on the realm of Portugal; but that, notwithstanding these assurances, hostile inroads into the territory of Portugal had been concocted in Spain, and executed under the eyes of the Spanish authorities by Portuguese regiments, which had deserted into Spain, and which the Spanish government had repeatedly and solemnly engaged to disarm and disperse."

Two ministerial speeches were delivered after the message had been read, which in tone and manner pre-

sented a remarkable contrast one to the other. That of Mr. Canning, in the House of Commons, was eloquent, impetuous, and fiery. The Duke, in the House of Lords, spoke like a man whose long experience of the miseries of war weighed heavily upon him, and who did not hesitate to deplore the necessity which had arisen for taking a step which might possibly result in the renewal of these miseries. Both speakers equally announced, that the application of Portugal had been attended to, and that troops were already on the march towards Portsmouth, where a fleet was assembled for the purpose of conveying them to Lisbon. It is impossible to describe the sensation which was produced throughout England, when the newspapers of the following day made the public aware of what had actually occurred. But the general feeling was one of exultation; not so much because it was felt that liberal principles had triumphed, as because war, or the prospect of war, is, and always has been, as popular with Englishmen in the beginning, as it becomes irksome when taxes grow heavy and trade is paralysed. The Duke alone looked grave and said nothing, except to express his earnest hope, both in public and in private, that the storm which he apprehended as about to break upon the Peninsula, might blow over.

Meanwhile there had occurred in the East events which appeared not less pregnant with danger, and to deal with which the Duke was considered, by Lord Liverpool and the rest of the cabinet, as the only competent person. In December 1825, Alexander, Emperor of all the Russias, died childless; after settling the succession, not in the person of Constantine, the elder of his brothers, but in that of the Grand Duke

Nicholas. It was an arrangement, which, for reasons hereafter to be explained, had been agreed to by the whole of the imperial family; and when the death of Alexander became known, Nicholas was proclaimed at St. Petersburg. But he did not ascend the throne without a struggle. A military revolt broke out, which was not suppressed without bloodshed; and in which the name of Constantine was made use of, not less to his own annoyance than to that of the emperor.

Little was known beyond the court circle of the character of the new czar, and the rumours which went abroad concerning him were of a mixed nature. He was described as proud, warlike, and ambitious, but true to his word if he once pledged it. His reverence for the memory of his deceased brother was known to be great, and he took the earliest opportunity of declaring that he considered himself bound, both by honour and affection, to follow in all respects, the policy of his predecessor. Now for some time previously to the death of Alexander, the relations between the court of St. Petersburg and the Porte had been of the most unsatisfactory nature. There were complaints on both sides of violated treaties, and, on the part of Russia, frequent demands for redress; as well as a determination, often repeated, to obtain, by fair means or by foul, a settlement of the Greek question. It was of the utmost importance to the peace of Europe that the new emperor should be induced to act with moderation; and the Duke of Wellington was commissioned, not only to carry to Nicholas the congratulations of his own sovereign, but to find out what the czar's intentions really were, and to dissuade him, if possible, from war.

A measure of this sort was the more necessary, that

there had arisen, of late, some coolness between the governments of Russia and England. The former charged the latter with encouraging the Porte to evade the engagements into which she had entered:—the latter believed that the former was bent on picking a quarrel with the Porte, as an excuse for entering actively into the Greek insurrection. Hence when in 1824 the Emperor Alexander invited his allies to meet him at St. Petersburg, all except England obeyed the summons. She alone held aloof, because, though not less anxious than the rest to see the Greek difficulty overcome, she could not be a party to the application of force, or even of menace in order to effect that object.

The congress met and separated without making any intimation to England of the conclusions at which it had arrived. This was of itself a suspicious circumstance; but when in addition Count Lieven, then the Russian ambassador at the court of St. James's, suddenly adopted a tone of reserve on the subject of Greece, an inference was drawn, that the congress had resolved to follow a line of action of which England could not approve. Meanwhile her own policy in regard to Greece seems to have been somewhat vague. When a proposal was made by the insurgents to place themselves under her protection, she declined it. When it got abroad that a similar proposal was about to be made to France, she opposed that also. Her object apparently was, to bring about an accommodation between Turkey and Greece, on terms which the Greeks themselves had originally suggested; viz.: that Greece should acknowledge the suzerainty of the Porte, and pay a reasonable tribute, while at the same time she administered her internal affairs in her own way, and

under a Greek government. On this head, however, no settled plan would appear to have been formed, at all events none was made public.

The English government did not know that the results of the congress of St. Petersburg had disappointed and disgusted Alexander; and that Alexander's successor came early to the conclusion, that Russia had no sincere friend on the continent of Europe. Such however was the case, for after engaging Alexander not to break with the Porte, by promises of an effective interference in his favour, the ministers of Austria, France, and Prussia had done nothing; while one of them—Prince Metternich—committed the extraordinary imprudence to boast of his own cleverness in deceiving the emperor, and to turn into ridicule the gullibility of his dupe. This occurred in Paris, during Metternich's sojourn there in the spring of 1825, and the story being repeated to Alexander, probably with some exaggeration, rendered him furious. He felt that he was not only isolated, but insulted; and he surrendered himself to a morbid determination, henceforth to rely upon himself alone, and to seek his own objects with the strong hand.

He was in this temper when another piece of intelligence reached him, still more mortifying to his self-love, as it was in its nature much more startling. In the course of one of his tours through the outlying provinces, an English officer in the Russian service informed him that a frightful conspiracy had long been matured, and might at any moment break out into action. Ever since the murder of Paul a project had, it appeared, been entertained of changing the dynasty by putting to death in one day all the princes of the

house of Romanoff. Some of the most powerful Russian families were said to be implicated in this conspiracy, which had its ramifications everywhere; indeed, so extensive was it represented to be, and so formidable, that the emperor, after well considering the matter, determined to run all personal risks rather than throw the empire into confusion by endeavouring to search it out. It was his knowledge of the existence of this conspiracy, rather than any difficulty presented by the Polish marriage, which induced Alexander to postpone Constantine to Nicholas in the line of succession; for Nicholas was as popular as Constantine was the reverse, and the imperial family, after consulting upon the subject, came to the conclusion that, under existing circumstances, the elder brother was bound to submit to a great personal sacrifice rather than aggravate the dangers with which the throne itself was threatened.

It is now well known that Constantine, a harsh, but not an ungenerous man, offered no opposition to the arrangement; it is equally certain that he was not a consenting party to the revolt which subsequently occurred in his name. But the acquiescence of his brother in a scheme which Alexander proposed only under the pressure of a deep anxiety, brought no relief to his own anguish. It seemed as if all the objects for which he had lived were defeated. His dream of becoming the great benefactor of the age was dispelled; and now, finding that his allies were playing him false, and his own subjects conspiring against him, his proud heart broke, and he died.

The policy, foreign and domestic, to which Nicholas succeeded, was of a very complicated nature, and he

had no one out of the circle of his own courtiers with whom to advise. To them it naturally appeared that the best means of diverting men's thoughts from mischief at home was to give them occupation in foreign war. But war for Russia meant an attack upon Turkey, which could not but prove successful, unless France and Austria, to whom the aggrandisement of Russia in Europe could scarcely be a matter of indifference, should unite with England to prevent it. On the other hand, France and Austria were both open to considerations which exercised no influence whatever over England, and if they should be induced to stand back, then it was next to impossible for England and Turkey to stop the march of a Russian army upon Constantinople.

It was under these circumstances that the Duke of Wellington set out upon his mission to St. Petersburg, carrying with him a long and carefully written letter of instructions from Mr. Canning. It turned mainly, indeed almost exclusively, upon the supposed difficulties which stood in the way of a peaceful settlement of the Greek question. It contained, among other things, extracts from two letters, which had been addressed by Mr. Canning to the British ambassador at Constantinople, and of which the Duke was to make use, in order to convince the czar of the great desire of the British government to help him out of his difficulties with the Porte. One of these extracts explained the wishes of England in regard to the treaty of Bucharest, every article of which the Porte was urged to fulfil to the letter. The other referred to a communication which Count Lieven had recently made to the Foreign Minister, and to which Mr. Canning, after some inquiry,

was disposed to give credence. It had been represented to the British government that the Sultan, wearied with the Greek war and its consequences, had made over the Morea in form to Mahomet Ali, to be held by him under the Sublime Porte on the same terms on which he held the pashalic of Egypt. By this deed Ibrahim Pasha was authorised to pacify the country as speedily and effectually as he could, and it was represented that he was preparing to do so by removing the inhabitants in a body, selling them into slavery in Africa, and repeopling the Morea with a Mahometan colony from Egypt. Such a step as this Mr. Stratford Canning was desired to say that England would never permit. She had no wish to interfere, except with her friendly offices, between the Porte and its rebellious subjects; but any attempt to depopulate the Morea of Christians, and to set up another Barbary state in the heart of Europe, she would oppose, even if compelled to employ her fleet in doing so.

The object which the Duke was expected to attain, by showing these extracts to the czar, was to satisfy him of the friendly feelings of England towards Russia, and her anxiety to carry into effect her own engagements to Alexander, and to press the same punctuality and good faith upon Turkey. Having accomplished this, he was to offer the mediation of England between Turkey and Greece, single-handed, if that were practicable, but in co-operation with Russia, should Russia desire to be a party to the agreement, and Turkey offer no opposition. His Grace was, however, cautioned not to commit himself to any specific engagement, and, above all, to object to a congress, should the czar propose one. If, however, the czar should insist upon

a congress, then the Duke was to hold out for three points; first, that the king of the Netherlands, as head of a maritime power next in importance to France, should be represented at the congress; next, that the congress should assemble in London; and third, that its deliberations should be prefaced by the re-appointment of a Russian ambassador to the Porte; for as yet the only representative of the czar at Constantinople was a chargé d'affaires, a man of inferior rank in Russia, a Greek, by name Minciacki. Finally, the Duke was desired to stipulate for an engagement on all sides, that there should be no attempt to gain an increase, either of territory or influence, at the expense of Turkey.

The Duke quitted London early in February, 1826, and taking Berlin on his way, arrived in that city on the 17th. His reception by the court, the army, and the people, was of the most gratifying nature, and he had much interesting and (as it was intended that he should believe) confidential conversation with the Prussian Minister for Foreign Affairs. From him he learned that the new emperor was bent upon war; that he preferred it to arbitration in any form, and had made up his mind to resist the interference of the Allies, unless they engaged to mediate for him in a body. This was not very cheering intelligence for a plenipotentiary, one of whose purposes in coming abroad was to prevent the meeting of another congress; and who hoped to avert war through the sole mediation of England, or, if that were rejected, by bringing England and Russia to act cordially together. Its effect, however, was simply to prepare him for opposition, which, as the event proved, took a very different shape from

that which either he or his government had anticipated.

Continuing his journey, the Duke reached St. Petersburg in the morning of the 2nd of March, and the same evening he had an interview with Count Nesselrode. It was conducted on both sides with some *finesse*, and on the part of the Duke with a good deal of reserve. The great object of the Russian minister seemed to be to impress the Duke with the belief that the emperor, his master, was not desirous of war; indeed he repeated this declaration so often, and, as it sometimes appeared, so gratuitously, that the Duke came to the conclusion that M. Nesselrode must have heard of the inquiries which his Grace had been making at Berlin, and was anxious to remove the impression created by the results of these inquiries. Partly because he entertained this suspicion, partly because his own papers were still upon the road, and that he was unwilling to commit himself until they should arrive, and till he should have had an opportunity of conversing with others, the Duke confined himself to general declarations, that if the emperor were really desirous of avoiding war, he would find the King, his master, ready to do all in his power to help Russia out of her difficulties. Count Nesselrode, on the other hand, expressed his anxiety to be made acquainted at once with the details of whatever plans of accommodation his Grace was commissioned to propose. "Such confidence," he observed, "would be of the greatest possible use to him, because it would instruct him what to say to the ministers of the other powers." But the only answer which he could extract from the Duke was this: "Tell them the truth; that his Britannic Majesty's govern-

ment is disposed to do all in their power to enable you to get the better of your difficulties."

On the following day the Duke was admitted to his first audience with the czar. It lasted a long time, and impressed his Grace with a very high opinion of the emperor's disposition and abilities. There was no reserve about him, nor any affectation of it. He declared himself averse to war, but did not see how he could keep out of it with honour. This was not owing, as the English government seemed to imagine, to any mawkish sympathy for the Greeks. They were in rebellion against their legitimate sovereign, and if he were to make their religion an excuse for interfering by force of arms between them and the Porte, he should have no right to complain if the Porte in return were to stir up his own Mahometan subjects to rebel against him. His ground of difference with Turkey lay nearer home ; for not to this day had the Porte fulfilled its engagements to his predecessor. And having exhausted all the resources of diplomacy, there remained for him now no alternative except to send in an ultimatum, and to abide by it.

This language was so different from that which he had been led to expect, and so much at variance with what the Emperor Alexander used to employ, that for a moment the Duke felt inclined to doubt its sincerity. But he found, on inquiry, that it corresponded so exactly with everything which his Majesty said to the ministers of other powers, that he could not believe it to be assumed. His first dispatch home is, therefore, written in a cheerful spirit, and contains an expression of his belief that there will be no war in Europe at all, especially for the sake of Greece. But he had a more

difficult game to play in discussing the differences between Russia and Turkey, arising out of the breach or assumed breach of the Treaty of Bucharest by the latter. A word or two in reference to the nature of that treaty will be necessary in order to give the reader some understanding of the sort of negotiation to which the Duke now applied himself.

It had been settled in 1822, at the Congress of Vienna, that the Allies should exercise their influence in order to bring the Porte to reason, and prevent a rupture with Russia. The matter to be handled was the fulfilment of a treaty, whereby the Porte had agreed to withdraw its troops from Wallachia and Moldavia; to restore the Hospodars to the principalities, with their own police under them; to rebuild the churches which had been destroyed during the war, and to adjust the affairs of Servia with certain deputies, who were to repair to Constantinople for the purpose. Furthermore, the Porte consented to give free passage into the Black Sea to the merchant ships of all nations; while Russia promised to withdraw from whatever portion of territory she might have occupied, and to renew in form her diplomatic relations with Turkey.

Time passed, and the stipulations of this treaty were on both sides evaded. A fort in Mingrelia which the Russians had seized was found so important in keeping open the communications with her army in Mount Caucasus, that she made no move to abandon it; whilst on the side of Turkey no churches were rebuilt, and, as was alleged, at least in St. Petersburg, her troops still occupied the Principalities. The fact was, that of 30,000 men whom she had originally marched into the Principalities, a considerable portion was left

there, under the designation of police. But as these derived their authority to act not from the Hospodars but from the Porte, Russia refused to regard them as police; and Wallachians and Moldavians equally complained that they plundered instead of protecting the country.

Not satisfied with this, the Porte had, it appeared, seized the Servian deputies as soon as they arrived in the capital, and placing them under restraint, kept them as hostages for the good behaviour of their countrymen. Against these acts, which she described as flagrant violations of the Treaty of Bucharest, Russia remonstrated, and finding that no attention was paid to her remonstrances, she assumed a higher tone. She demanded that the Porte should send commissioners to Odessa to arrange there the differences between the two courts; and threatened, in the event of a refusal, to withdraw her representative from Constantinople and to take military possession of the Principalities.

Satisfied from what had passed between the emperor and himself, that there was little to be apprehended on the side of Greece, the Duke went no farther than to draw up a paper, in which he showed what the wishes of England were respecting the pacification of that country, and how his government had interfered to defeat the scheme for depopulating the Morea. The paper was well received by the czar, who, in his turn, entered largely into his other grounds of quarrel with Turkey, and showed the Duke a note which he proposed to transmit to Constantinople, and of which the tone was not only peremptory but menacing. A long and friendly discussion ensued, during which the Duke

besought the emperor to modify many of his expressions, and above all to omit the demand that Turkish commissioners should be sent to Odessa. For as the Porte never gave its confidence to any foreign agent, it would probably refuse to comply with the emperor's request; and if it did comply, would disavow the acts of its own agents when they returned, and might perhaps put them to death. Nor was this all. The Duke entreated the emperor not to rest his case on the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest. He had himself violated these terms, and was, therefore, disentitled to appeal to them. Neither was it becoming to threaten, unless he was prepared to follow up his threats with acts of hostility; in which case he would enter at the very commencement of his reign upon an unjust war.

The emperor received these remonstrances in the very best spirit, and frankly admitted that he was not justified in keeping possession of the fort in Mingrelia. He added that the threat of withdrawing his chargé d'affaires did not necessarily imply a determination to go to war, which, on the contrary, he would do every thing in his power to avoid. When reminded that it was neither wise nor dignified to threaten, unless there was a purpose of carrying the threat into execution, he retorted with great quickness upon England and her proceedings. "What was she then doing? Had she not threatened the Porte, if it should refuse, peremptorily to prohibit Ibrahim Pasha from carrying his projects into effect in the Morea? What was there more unbecoming in the threats of Russia than in those of England, both powers being determined, by their own showing, to avoid a collision." The Duke found little difficulty in proving that the two cases had no

affinity; that the object of England was to defeat a particular design which a mere threat of naval interference on her part must accomplish; whereas Russia gave the Porte but a single month to perform certain specified acts, in the event of her failing to do which, Russia must either go farther, or stultify herself. Besides, no other European power would blame England for preventing such an outrage as that with which the Morea was threatened; whereas all must look with disfavour upon a war between Russia and Turkey, and upon the inevitable aggrandisement of the former at the expense of the latter. The emperor admitted that there was a difference, but repeated what he had already said, that he expected to gain his ends without having recourse to violence; that the Porte was not open to any other argument but that of menace; and that England might depend upon it, that even if forced into war, he should not extend his frontier one inch beyond its present limits.

Here was another point gained. A war between Russia and Turkey alarmed the rest of Europe, only so far as it tended to bring Russia further towards the West. It was a great matter to obtain this assurance from the czar, that he aimed at no conquests from Turkey, and would not retain them if they were achieved. At the same time the emperor observed that the Turks had no business in Europe, and that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to head a crusade for the purpose of driving them back into Asia. As however the other powers would not agree to this, he was not only willing but desirous of living on good terms with them.

Encouraged by all this, his Grace proposed that the

emperor should not send his note at present, but should withhold it till there should be time for him to communicate with the English government, and for the English government to remonstrate, through its minister, with the Porte. The emperor objected, on the plea that the season was passing away, and that if compelled to move his troops at all, he must move them shortly. At the same time he repeated over and over again that he entertained no views of conquest, and that he should content himself with occupying and holding the Principalities, as a material guarantee for the fulfilment of the engagements into which Turkey had entered.

We should lengthen out unnecessarily this portion of our narrative, were we to give in detail the substance of each successive conference as it occurred, sometimes between the Duke and Count Nesselrode, sometimes between his Grace and the czar. Enough is done when we state, that for a while the Duke's arguments seemed to carry all before them; that the demand for Turkish plenipotentiaries to repair to Odessa was given up as a *sine quâ non*, and that six weeks instead of a month were allowed to Turkey to make arrangements for satisfying Russia in other respects. In bringing all this about, the Duke made happy use of the emperor's admission respecting the Greeks, by showing that if Russia went to war with Turkey before Greece was pacified, Greece must as a matter of necessity become the ally of Russia; and that Russia could not, at the termination of the war, replace Greece in any shape, under her old masters. But just as matters had reached this point, Count Lieven arrived from England; and whether through his influence or not, first Count Nesselrode, and by-and-by the emperor, a good deal modified

their tone. For example, the emperor had agreed to send an ambassador to Constantinople, whenever the Porte should assure England that she was prepared to fulfil her engagements. Counts Lieven and Nesselrode endeavoured to back out of this concession, and declined to reduce to writing the promise which the emperor had given; "that even in the event of war, he would retain none of his conquests." It appeared also that they had worked upon their master in the same direction; for when the Duke repeated the request to him, that his imperial majesty would enable him to furnish the British government with tangible proof of his generous intentions, the emperor refused to sign anything, unless the Duke would pledge England, first to obtain for Russia the redress which she required, and next to exact from the Porte pecuniary indemnification for the expenses of a war, should war arise.

Perceiving that this was not the moment to argue the point further, the Duke reverted to the Greek question, which he proposed to settle on the terms originally suggested by the Greeks themselves. These implied, as we have already shown, the entire evacuation of Greece by the Turks. Indeed there was a clause in the draft of the treaty, which provided for the purchase by Greece at a valuation of the property of all Turks then resident within her limits. When these arrangements should be complete, he expressed his opinion that the execution of them should be placed under the joint guarantee of Russia, Austria, France, and Prussia, each of whom had a more immediate interest in the maintenance of the new order of things than England. Meanwhile he would not hear of any interference on the part of Russia with Ibrahim Pasha. That must be left to

England alone, who could deal with Ibrahim as she had done with Algiers, without provoking a quarrel with the Porte or with anybody else. Whereas the interference of Russia would be regarded as an espousal of the cause of the Greeks, and a war between her and the Porte must inevitably follow.

So matters rested for a while: but on the 21st of March the Duke considered it necessary to return to the subject of the czar's note, and to his own anxious wish that it should be withheld, till the English government had time to communicate with Sir Stratford Canning. He was greatly surprised when Count Nesselrode informed him that the note was already sent off. A man less discreet would have fired up at such an announcement; for undoubtedly the proceeding, had it taken place, would have indicated no desire on the emperor's part to treat England, or her representative, with too much courtesy. But the Duke kept his temper, partly because he suspected that Count Nesselrode had gone beyond the truth in his statement, partly because in any case no good could be expected to arise from an altercation with that minister. It was a wise determination, and in due time its policy, not less than its wisdom, became manifest; for at a subsequent interview, the emperor assured him that the note was still in his own possession, and that he would do nothing regarding it which might occasion annoyance to one whom he respected and esteemed as he did the Duke of Wellington. Nor was this all. The emperor agreed to endorse the conditions which the Duke proposed for the pacification of Greece, and on the 4th of April, a paper was signed by Count Nesselrode to that effect. By the deed in question, England was autho-

rised to mediate between Turkey and Greece. If the terms of accommodation were accepted, then England and Russia pledged themselves to seek no accession of territory or influence in carrying them into effect. If they were rejected, then the two powers undertook to find some other means of settling the question, subject to the same rule of abnegation in the matter of territory or influence for themselves.

The Duke had gained much: undoubtedly more than ever he expected himself to gain, or than any other diplomatist would have been able to accomplish. He felt his way further, but soon discovered that it was useless. The czar did not conceal, that come what might, he had designs in Asia which he was determined not to forego; and the Duke considered it unwise, after such an avowal, to irritate by seeking to thwart him. Enough was done in obtaining from him a written declaration that he would not endeavour to extend his frontier in Europe. In Asia he considered himself free to follow his own course, and the Duke would not take advantage of a word hastily spoken, in the hope of thereby restraining him. But the Duke gained more than all this. He obtained the emperor's sanction to write at length to Sir Stratford Canning, and to explain that Russia had no intention of going to war with Turkey; and that the Divan was therefore free to consider the propositions which England might make on the subject of the pacification of Greece, with all the calmness and regard for self-respect which the importance of the subject required.

This was the last piece of business which the Duke transacted at St. Petersburg, but it was not the last wise and conciliatory proceeding to which he lent him-

self. In his parting interview with the czar, which occurred on the 5th of April, he learned that the emperor was desirous of showing every mark of respect to his brother Constantine, and that it would be gratifying to him if the Duke would go round by Warsaw, so as to visit the archduke. His Grace cheerfully acceded to the emperor's wish, and was the guest of the Grand Duke Constantine for portions of three days. A strong impression appears to have been made upon him by all that he saw and heard. Of the Grand Duchess he spoke as of a very charming woman, the object of whose life it seemed to be to keep the imperial family in concord. The Grand Duke himself was not quite so pleasing. He exhibited signs of dissatisfaction with the state to which circumstances had reduced him, and seemed impatient to escape from it. It was clear, indeed, that the emperor, if he desired to remain on good terms with his brother, must, for some time at least, humour him in many things, and above all, regulate, as far as might be possible, his foreign policy so as to meet Constantine's wishes. Still the Duke quitted the Russian dominions, more and more satisfied that if England managed her foreign policy with ordinary discretion, there would be no war.

There was a story current at the time, which we have since heard repeated, that at the parting interview the emperor assured the Duke, that out of the love which his Majesty bore for him, he should never, unless driven to it by the sternest necessity, wage war with the Porte. We do not vouch for the truth of this tale, but it is a fact, and a remarkable one, that the future policy of Nicholas—whether he came under this direct obligation or not, was strictly in keeping with its tenor.

The war between Russia and Turkey, which occurred a few months later, was not of his seeking. It was forced upon him: partly through the blunders of England, partly through the obstinacy of the Porte; and it was not pushed to an extremity. But scarcely was the Duke removed from the stage of life, ere the old views of the court of St. Petersburg revived. Prince Menschikoff's mission to Constantinople took place, and the campaign of the Crimea, and the fall of Sebastopol, with all the evils attending them, soon followed.

CHAP. VIII.

PROGRESS OF PUBLIC DISSENSION IN REGARD TO ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES AND REFORM IN PARLIAMENT. — THE ELECTIONS OF 1826. — DEATH OF THE DUKE OF YORK. — DUKE OF WELLINGTON COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. — ILLNESS OF LORD LIVERPOOL. — THE DUKE AND MR. CANNING. — THE LATTER PRIME MINISTER. — THE DUKE'S DEFENCE OF HIS OWN PROCEEDINGS. — THE DUKE OF CLARENCE LORD HIGH ADMIRAL.

1826-27.

If in this imperfect outline of public affairs no notice has been taken, either of the hostilities which had broken out in India, or of the progress of the Greek insurrection, it is not to be supposed that these occurrences were regarded by the Duke with indifference, or that he was inclined, either publicly or privately, to make light of them. His desire to promote the well-being of that great empire within which the foundations of his own military renown were laid, never passed away; and he watched the course of events as they fell out, both in Birmah and at Burtpore, with great anxiety. Nor was he less interested in the revolt of Greece, which, however, he regarded rather as a blow struck at the balance of power in Europe than as the effort of an enslaved people to assert their independence. Still, as it was not his special business to give a direction to the national policy in either case, his individual opinions, whatever these might be, necessarily merged in the decisions of the cabinet. In like manner the commercial crash of 1825 and 1826, which spread so

much alarm and suffering through the land, affected him only as it did any other individual member of the government, which had inaugurated those changes in the laws affecting trade and navigation to which the sufferers, rightly or wrongly, attributed their misfortunes. The case was different in regard to the struggle, which day by day became more embittered, between those who clamoured for Catholic emancipation and those who resisted it. Whatever part he may have taken in that contest as a minister, whatever his votes may have been in parliament, his private views respecting the abstract merits of the case seem to have been shared by neither party. He could not bring himself to regard the exclusion of Roman Catholics from political power as the key-stone of the British constitution. Nor was he able to perceive that the Roman Catholics had any right to complain of political, far less of personal injustice, in consequence of such exclusion. The laws which shut them out from parliament operated as other laws do which place more or less of restraint on individuals or on classes. They had been passed with a view to the public good, and till it could be shown that the public good would be more advanced by their repeal than by their retention, he saw no reason, on the ground of abstract right, for interfering with them. He saw, however, at the same time, that till the question should be settled one way or another, there could be no freedom of action, either to the government or to the legislature. There rested also upon his mind a painful conviction, that if matters long continued as they were, Ireland would break out into rebellion; for which, indeed, the bulk of its population was ripe, and from which they were kept back, only by

the prudence, perhaps by the timidity, of Mr. O'Connell and the subordinate leaders in the movement.'

It was to this subject, therefore, more than to any other, of public interest, that the Duke at this time directed his attention; and he already began to express himself concerning it to those who enjoyed the largest share of his confidence, with a reserve, which grew day by day less guarded. Not that the claims of the Roman Catholics occupied his attention exclusively; quite otherwise. For years back Lord John Russell had been in the habit of periodically bringing a bill into parliament for the better representation of the people in the House of Commons; which, though rejected by overwhelming majorities on all occasions, was not without significancy. Meanwhile the laws for the protection of the agricultural interest against foreign competition, though recently altered so as to render them less restrictive than they had originally been, appeared to give satisfaction to nobody. It will be seen by and by that the Duke's views in regard to the former of these subjects have been very little understood. They were, in point of fact, less narrow than those of what was then considered to be the liberal section of Lord Liverpool's administration. But in regard to the latter, it cannot be denied that the Duke thought in 1826, as he continued to think to the day of his death, that without such protection to domestic agriculture as should render England independent of foreign countries for her supply of food, it would be impossible to preserve the balance even between the aristocratic and the democratic elements in the constitution.

The Duke was absent from England when the dissolution of 1826 took place. He saw nothing, therefore,

of the turmoil and bustle of the general election. But he found, on his return, that in its results it more than justified the worst fears which he had previously entertained respecting the state of feeling throughout the country. In Great Britain, not less than in Ireland, the point most keenly discussed between candidates and electors, had been Catholic emancipation. In Ireland the Romanists carried all before them. Priests went about from parish to parish, canvassing as priests only can do; while pastoral letters, from bishops, charged the faithful to vote as the interests of holy church and their religion required, not otherwise. In England and Scotland, on the other hand, a strong Protestant spirit had been roused; and a pledge to resist the demands of the Catholic Association was in many places required as the one great test of fitness for a seat in the legislature. Hence the temper of the House of Commons which met in November was a good deal changed from that which it had exhibited in the previous May. Among the Irish members the cause of emancipation had achieved a large accession of strength, which, however, was more than counterbalanced by the exclusion of many members, who as representatives of English and Scotch constituencies had formerly voted for that measure.

Things were in this state when the Duke of York sank under the accumulation of maladies which had long oppressed him. He died as he had lived—an upright and truthful man, regretted by the army, over which he had long presided, and commanding the respect of the community at large, in which he had not one personal enemy. But his death exercised, or was supposed at the time to do so, considerable influence over more than the military administration of the

country. In him the great champions of Protestant ascendency felt that they had lost their leader; while the friends of emancipation breathed more freely, because one of the principal obstacles to the accomplishment of their wishes seemed to be removed out of the way. It is probable that both parties arrived at a tolerably just conclusion in reference to this matter, though there occurred nothing in the course of the session to justify such a conclusion; for the Duke of York had taken his ground, and the King was well known to entertain for his honest judgment a profound respect. It soon appeared, however, that they who looked to his Royal Highness's death as an event likely to lead to an immediate settlement of the question, had deceived themselves. On the 5th of March, 1827, Sir Francis Burdett, after a brief delay, brought in his promised bill for the repeal of the disqualifying laws, which, though Mr. Canning supported it with all the weight of his newly-formed administration, was lost on the second reading by a majority of four.

There could be but one opinion in England in regard to the individual whom it would become the crown to place at the head of the army. His eminent public services, his great military experience, and the part which he had played in rendering the army what it was, all pointed out the Duke of Wellington as the only man living to whom the responsibilities of commander-in-chief ought to be committed; and though some little doubt seems to have been expressed as to the fitness, in a constitutional point of view, of nominating to an office so purely executive a cabinet minister, it was not allowed to weigh for a moment against the obvious advantages of the arrangement. Accordingly, the

Duke kissed hands on his appointment to the command of the army*; and in order that he might neither be lost to the administration nor sit in the cabinet as commander-in-chief, he was pressed to retain, together with his new office, that which he had previously held, viz. the master-generalship of the ordnance. He readily complied with the proposal, and kept his seat in the cabinet; yet the want of unanimity in that body had by this time become so settled that even he, sanguine as he was, hardly ventured to encourage the hope that it would long hold together; and that which would have probably been brought about in due time by the common course of events, an occurrence as melancholy as it was unlooked for, hurried forward.

The Duke of York died on the 5th of December, 1826. His funeral was attended by most of the cabinet ministers, including, among others, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Liverpool, and Mr. Canning. On the 14th of February Lord Liverpool went up with an address of condolence from the House of Lords to the King, and on the 16th his lordship was smitten with paralysis, from which he never recovered. It was a terrible blow in every point of view to the government; for though neither a very able minister nor a very eloquent debater, Lord Liverpool deserved and commanded the respect of all sections of his party. He had, no doubt, been carried away of late out of the beaten track of traditional policy in which a portion of his colleagues loved to move. He had given himself up, in matters of fiscal and commercial arrangement, to the guidance of the political economists; but besides that he was still a determined enemy to the admission of Roman Catholics to

* He was at the same time appointed Colonel of the grenadier regiment of foot guards.

power, he was too high-minded by far to negotiate with the leaders of the opposition for the success of any measure which might be distasteful to a majority of the cabinet. In this respect he differed a good deal from the distinguished leader of the House of Commons. Impatient of the restraints imposed upon him by the dogged caution of his Tory colleagues, Mr. Canning did not hesitate on many different occasions to communicate confidentially with Mr. Brougham and other Whig leaders. Indeed, it would almost appear as if from time to time he took advantage of the accidental absence of some of its members to propose and carry, at meetings of the cabinet, projects previously sanctioned by the opposition. All this was very distasteful to the Duke. Whether a measure were right or wrong in itself, he could be no willing party to it if chicane, or the appearance of chicane, were necessary to secure its adoption; and hence it came to pass that the strain upon his forbearance grew so intense that there needed only some such event as had now occurred to break it altogether.

Among other measures upon which ministers had agreed during the recess was the introduction of a bill into parliament for settling a revised scale of duty according to which grain might be imported from abroad, and for rendering more easy the admission of bonded corn into the home market. Whether the Duke was beyond seas when this proposal was brought forward, we have not been able to ascertain; but it is clear from his speech in the House of Lords that he was not present at the cabinet which discussed and finally adopted it. It is equally certain that, for the reasons elsewhere assigned, he regarded every approach to the establishment of free trade in corn with apprehension; and that he

could not in his heart approve of a measure which, according to his view of the case, would afford increased facilities to the evasion of the Corn Laws as they then existed. Still, the question having been considered, discussed, and formally approved, he felt himself constrained to assent to it, as one for which Lord Liverpool's administration was responsible; though he never appears to have had an opportunity of studying its details till the bill itself was actually before parliament.

It had been settled that the bill in question should be introduced simultaneously into both houses: into the Lords by Lord Liverpool, into the Commons by Mr. Canning; and the 17th of February was the day appointed for making this twofold motion. But on the 16th Lord Liverpool was struck down, and Mr. Canning himself having caught a violent cold at the funeral of the Duke of York, was obliged to remove for change of air to Brighton. Though there could be little or no hope that Lord Liverpool would ever be able to resume the labours of office, the King was not advised to appoint immediately a successor to him at the treasury. Indeed, parties ran so high in the cabinet, that no agreement could be come to respecting the individual under whom all would be willing to serve; while out of doors a course of negotiation was carried on, to expose which in all its ramifications would be to reveal secrets which could not be laid bare to the present generation without damage both to private feeling and to the public interests. The Liverpool cabinet was still, therefore, in power, though destitute of an efficient head, when on the 1st of March Mr. Canning brought in his Corn Bill; and the bill being backed by all the weight of the government,

passed with little opposition through the House of Commons. Before it reached the Lords, however, those changes had occurred which placed Mr. Canning at the head of an administration of which the Duke, Lords Eldon, Bathurst, Westmoreland, and Mr. Peel, all declined to become members. His retirement from office appeared to the Duke, to release him, in a great degree, from the engagements by which, as a minister, he was bound to support in their integrity measures brought forward by the cabinet. He resolved, therefore, to take his own course in dealing with Mr. Canning's Corn Bill, and when the proper time came he did so.

We have no concern with the grounds on which other statesmen refused to serve under the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Each told his own tale when parliament reassembled after the short recess; but it is necessary, in order to place in a clear light one or two points in the Duke's public character, that the motives by which he was actuated both then and afterwards should be understood. We shall, therefore, endeavour to give as full an account of the transaction as a regard to what is due to the principle of proper reserve in such cases will permit.

Enough has been said elsewhere to show that the Duke never reposed any settled confidence in Mr. Canning. He knew the value of that brilliant statesman as a debater, and could not deny to him the possession of talents of the highest order; but besides that the two men thought differently on many points of foreign and domestic policy, the Duke regarded Mr. Canning, rightly or wrongly, as an intriguer. So long as Lord Liverpool remained at the head of the admin-

istration, the Duke, as he had been mainly instrumental in bringing Mr. Canning into office, was willing to work with him honestly and frankly. But to work with a man whom we cannot entirely trust, and to work under him, are two very different things. When, therefore, the necessity arose of appointing a new head to the administration, and when the Duke, among others, was called upon to give an opinion on the subject, he stated it to be his conviction that the existing cabinet could not go on unless Lord Liverpool were succeeded by a statesman entertaining the same opinions which his lordship had held on all important subjects, and especially on that of Catholic emancipation. It is worthy of remark, however, that in referring thus specifically to the Catholic Question, the Duke was desirous rather of illustrating his own general meaning than of expressing a wish that a cabinet should be formed on the principle of resistance to the Catholic claims. He knew that the state of parties in the House of Commons rendered an arrangement of this sort impossible; and even if it had been possible, he did not consider it to be desirable. But not seeing his way clearly to a solution of the difficulty, he was unwilling that it should be complicated by placing prematurely at the head of affairs any one committed to a course for which public opinion, both in parliament and out of it, was not yet ripe.

The Duke went straight to his point on this, as he did on all occasions. He did not propose himself to assume the reigns of government, though urged by the Tory section in the cabinet to do so; and he received no command from the Sovereign to form an administration. Neither was any private influence used to direct

the King's choice towards him, or towards any member of the administration who thought with him. The case was different with respect to Mr. Canning, who, considering that he had a right, both from position and talents, to aspire to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, left no means untried to obtain an acknowledgement of such right from his colleagues, without, however, openly and in plain language, making an avowal of his purposes in the cabinet.

It was owing to these causes, though ostensibly out of a feeling of delicacy to Lord Liverpool, that the general business of the country was carried on, from the 17th of February to the 12th of April, by a government destitute of an active head. Frequent consultations and discussions took place all this while among the members of the Government, but they found themselves unable to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Nor was this all: it is now well known—it was scarcely concealed at the moment—that others besides his colleagues in office were consulted by Mr. Canning. His correspondence with Mr. Brougham and Sir Robert Wilson was of the most confidential kind; and it secured for him the support of the Whigs, who desired his success, perhaps because they believed that it would break up the Tory party, and pave the way to their own accession to office. Besides, Mr. Canning was a great favourite with many of the leading writers and conductors of the daily and weekly press. Himself a man of letters, open and frank in his manner, with warm impulses and a generous disposition, he received on a footing of perfect equality, every man of talent and genius who approached him, and secured thereby that, which neither money nor condescending hospitality can

purchase—the hearty good-will of a class, whose influence may be denounced in this country, but is universally felt and admitted. The consequence was, that with a marvellous unanimity of sentiment, the newspapers, forgetful of their differences on other subjects, combined to write him up; and that the public mind was worked upon day by day to believe that the appointment of any other statesman to the office of Prime Minister would be a national wrong.

When matters had arrived at this point, Mr. Canning appears for the first time to have communicated his views to Mr. Peel. They were received by that distinguished statesman with coldness. Indeed, Mr. Peel did not hesitate to reply to the question, "whether he would be willing to serve under Mr. Canning?" that, "he could not so serve." This was on the 29th of March; and on the very next day, by some curious coincidence or another, a vote of supply was resisted in the House of Commons by Mr. Tierney, on the ground that the country was without a government. The resistance, whether a reality or a sham, was indeed overcome; but the fact that opposition had been offered, brought on, as perhaps it was intended to bring on, a crisis in the ministerial negotiation. The debate took place on the 30th of March, and on the 31st Mr. Canning made the suggestion, that he should retire from the administration altogether, and that a government should be formed on the avowed principle of resistance to the claims of the Roman Catholics. Mr. Canning did not pretend to believe that such an arrangement could be easily made, but he imagined it to be possible, and thought that in the existing state of parties, it ought to be tried. As Mr. Canning himself

probably anticipated, the suggestion was ill received both by the King and by the ministers. There was no desire in any quarter to make the Catholic question different from what it had been for years — an open question in the cabinet; and ministers therefore held to the original project of the Duke and his friends, that a nobleman professing the same opinions with Lord Liverpool should become First Lord of the Treasury, and that the administration should go on as it had done since 1822. With strange inconsistency Mr. Canning resisted this proposal. He could not consent, entertaining the strong opinions which he did, to serve under a minister who was opposed to the removal of Catholic disabilities, though he by no means wished to see the removal of these disabilities brought forward as a government measure. It was to no purpose that his colleagues reminded him that the only sacrifice of principle which they required from him was the same which he had voluntarily made five years previously, and cheerfully submitted to up to that time. According to the light in which he viewed the matter, there was an essential difference between the accession by an individual to an administration already formed, and the reconstruction of that administration under a new chief. That which he might readily do, which indeed he had done, in the former case, he could not without dishonour assent to in the latter. If he was to continue in the administration at all, it must be with a friend to Catholic emancipation at its head.

The field of controversy was thus very much narrowed. The wish expressed on all sides was, that the noblemen and gentlemen now composing the cabinet should continue to carry on the government under one

of themselves. This one, Mr. Canning insisted, should hold particular opinions on a particular question of policy, and among such as held these opinions, there was confessedly none except himself qualified in other respects for the post. Still Mr. Canning's name was never once brought forward in the cabinet as a candidate for the premiership. On the contrary, Mr. Canning himself, in communicating with the Duke of Wellington on the 2nd of April, proposed that Mr. Robinson, at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer, should take office as First Lord of the Treasury with a peerage. Indeed, he went further; he stated to his Grace, that if the King should command him to bring forward a plan for the re-construction of the cabinet, he would base his scheme on this arrangement, because he believed it to be the best which under existing circumstances could be made. It does not appear that the Duke either assented to the proposition, or pointedly condemned it. That he had objections to it, we gather from the speech which he subsequently delivered in the House of Lords. For he there states, that had Mr. Canning, when properly authorised by the King, suggested Mr. Robinson as the new head of the cabinet, he was himself prepared to bring forward another candidate for the office. Of this fact, however, there can be no doubt, that on the 2nd of April the Duke of Wellington parted from Mr. Canning with the impression upon his mind, that should Mr. Canning receive his Majesty's commands to reconstruct the cabinet, he would stipulate for the place of First Lord of the Treasury with a peerage for Mr. Robinson.

So passed the interval between the 2nd and 10th of April. It was marked with no outward incident which

could lead the Duke to suppose that Mr. Canning had changed his mind, much less that influences, of the nature of which it is unnecessary to speak, were employed to remove the strong personal dislike which the King had hitherto entertained for his Foreign Secretary. The press, indeed, continued to describe Mr. Canning as the only man qualified to guide the councils of the nation; while the opposition in both Houses of Parliament omitted no opportunity of bandying compliments with him. But to coquetries of this sort the Duke had long been accustomed, and he treated them on the present, as he had done on former occasions, with perfect indifference. On the 6th, however, the King came unexpectedly to town, and on the 10th, late in the evening, the Duke received the following letter:

"Foreign Office, April 10, 1827, 6 P.M.

"My dear Duke of Wellington,—The King has, at an audience from which I have just returned, been graciously pleased to signify to me his Majesty's commands to lay before his Majesty, with as little loss of time as possible, a plan of arrangement for the re-construction of the administration. In executing these commands, it will be as much my own wish as it will be my duty to his Majesty to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's government has so long acted together. I need not add how essentially the accomplishment must depend upon your Grace's continuing a member of the cabinet.

"Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington,

"Your Grace's sincere and faithful servant,

"GEORGE CANNING."

The reader will not fail to observe the peculiar and very guarded phraseology of this communication. It makes no allusion to anything which might have previously passed between the writer and his correspondent. It does not say one word about the retention or exclusion from the cabinet of those who were at that moment the colleagues of both. It expresses no wish, either on the part of the writer or of the King, that the Duke should remain in office. It merely states that the King had given Mr. Canning a commission; that it would be Mr. Canning's wish as well as his duty in executing that commission to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's government had so long been conducted; and that it was essential to the accomplishment of such wish (the wish that a particular line of policy might be followed) that his Grace should continue a member of the cabinet. Now the principles of Lord Liverpool's administration had been those of a liberal Toryism—liberal as compared with the policy of bygone days in its commercial arrangements—liberal, as far as was consistent with the obligation of treaties, in its foreign policy—and so far liberal in its treatment of the Catholic question that while the premier himself voted for maintaining the laws as they stood, his colleagues were free to speak and to vote in both Houses of Parliament according to the dictates of their private judgment. Looking to these facts, and giving the Duke credit for a fair share of penetration, it can scarcely be doubted that the perusal of Mr. Canning's letter must have awakened some suspicion in his mind. A less keen-sighted observer of mankind than he could have hardly failed to be struck with its studied vagueness. It was not, however, his cue to read the riddle

till it should be rendered more plain; nor was it his habit to take offence lightly, or to bring on ruptures by assuming that there was false dealing where none might be intended. He therefore replied to Mr. Canning's note in the following terms:—

"London, April 10, 1827.

"My dear Mr. Canning,—I have received your letter of this evening, informing me that the King had desired you to lay before his Majesty a plan for the re-construction of the administration, and that in executing these commands it was your wish to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's government had so long acted. I anxiously desire to serve his Majesty, as I have hitherto done in his cabinet, with the same colleagues. But before I can give an answer to your obliging proposition, I should wish to know who the person is whom you intend to propose to his Majesty as the head of the government.

"Ever yours most sincerely,

"WELLINGTON."

It is right that the dates of these letters should be borne in mind. They were both written and both received on the evening of the 10th of April. Late in the afternoon of the 11th, a messenger brought to the Duke the subjoined note.

"Foreign Office, April 11, 1827.

"My dear Duke of Wellington,—I believed it to be so generally understood that the King usually intrusts the formation of an administration to the individual whom it is his Majesty's gracious intention to place at the head of it, that it did not occur to me when I com-

municated yesterday to your Grace the commands which I had just received from his Majesty, to add, that in the present instance his Majesty does not intend to depart from the usual course of proceeding on such occasions. I am sorry to have delayed some hours this answer to your Grace's letter, but from the nature of the subject, I did not like to forward it without having previously submitted it, together with your Grace's letter, to his Majesty.

"Ever, &c.,

"G. CANNING."

If the Duke had been struck with the studied ambiguity of Mr. Canning's former communication, he was more than surprised—he was rendered indignant, by the tone of this. He remembered what had passed between them on the 2nd, and that not a hint had been subsequently dropped by Mr. Canning to indicate that in regard to the selection of a head to the cabinet, his views had undergone any change. It was clear to him, therefore, as it had all along been suspected, that from the outset the Foreign Secretary was playing fast and loose with his colleagues. It was equally clear, that some influence apart from that of his constitutional advisers had been brought to bear upon the King's mind; and that a policy very different from that of Lord Liverpool would, and indeed must be, pursued by an administration to the head of which Mr. Canning had by such means attained. Without a moment's delay, therefore, the Duke sat down and wrote the letter of which we subjoin a copy.

"London, April 11, 1827.

"My dear Mr. Canning,—I have received your letter of this day, and I did not understand the one of yester-

day evening as you have now explained it to me; I understood from yourself that you had had in contemplation another arrangement, and I do not believe that the practice to which you refer has been so invariable as to enable me to affix a meaning to your letter which its words did not, in my opinion, convey. I trust that you will have experienced no inconvenience from the delay of this answer, which I assure you has been occasioned by my desire to discover a mode by which I could continue united to my present colleagues. I sincerely wish that I could bring my mind to the conclusion that, with the best intentions on your part, your government could be conducted practically on the principles of that of Lord Liverpool; — that it would be generally so considered, or that it would be adequate to meet our difficulties in a manner satisfactory to the King, or conducive to the interests of the country. As, however, I am convinced that these principles must be abandoned eventually,—that all our measures would be viewed with suspicion by the usual supporters of the government, that I could do no good in the cabinet, and that at last I should be obliged to separate myself from it at the moment when such severance would be more inconvenient to the King's service than it can be at present, I must beg to request his Majesty to excuse me from belonging to his councils.

"Ever, &c.,

"WELLINGTON."

And here, again, it is necessary that the attention of the reader should be drawn to one or two remarkable facts. Not only was Mr. Canning not prime minister when he wrote the first of these two letters, but even

when the second was written he had received no positive assurance from the King that he ever should become prime minister. His Majesty had indeed seen him on the 10th, and commanded him to propose a plan for the re-construction of the cabinet. But neither then nor on the 11th, when, being admitted to a second audience, he showed the Duke's letter to the King, was his seat in the House of Commons vacated, in consequence of his acceptance of the office of First Lord of the Treasury. In announcing to the Duke, therefore, on the 11th that he held that office, and that it was in his capacity of prime minister that he had written on the 10th, he was, to say the least of it, guilty of an act of doubtful political morality. He may have been led to believe, he was probably satisfied in his own mind, that the doors of the Treasury were open to him. But he had certainly not passed the threshold. Indeed it was quite within his power, on either day, to propose to the King, as he had previously done to the Duke, that all the members of the existing cabinet should keep their places except Mr. Robinson, and that he should pass to the House of Lords as Prime Minister. This, however, was a course which would not have served Mr. Canning's purpose. He was determined to be Prime Minister, and to govern with a cabinet purified from all the elements of worn-out Toryism; and believing, or persuading himself to believe, that there was but one mode open to the attainment of that object, he adopted it unscrupulously. He wrote to all his colleagues on the 11th, announcing that the King had conferred upon him the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and invited them to retain their places in his administration. That he really expected to receive

answers different from those which, by-and-by, came in, no one who considers impartially the nature of the consultations which had for some time been going on in the cabinet can for a moment suppose. Mr. Canning had long known what the feelings of his colleagues were. From one, and he not the least influential among them, he had already received a positive refusal; he could look, therefore, for only one result to his present invitation, and it came. Without any previous communication with one another, Lords Eldon, Westmoreland, Bathurst, Melville, and Mr. Peel, declined, as the Duke had done, to serve under him, and even Lord Bexley, though at first he agreed to remain in office, afterwards changed his mind, and sent in his resignation.

With some of these letters in his hand, and desiring others to be sent after him as they came in, Mr. Canning repaired, on the 12th, to the King, and after exhibiting them in proof that he had found it impossible to obey his Majesty's commands, he placed himself at his Majesty's disposal. Now, what had been his Majesty's commands? Did George the Fourth, who entertained for Mr. Canning the strongest personal dislike, who had over and over again declared himself determined to retire to Hanover rather than be a party to the admission of Roman Catholics to power — did George the Fourth, with these antipathies and prejudices in full force, command Mr. Canning to take the place of Lord Liverpool at all hazards? — or was Mr. Canning merely instructed to win over the existing cabinet, if he could, and in the event of success in this negotiation to assume the post of First Lord of the Treasury? For obvious reasons we leave these questions unanswered.

But the result of Mr. Canning's present conference with his Majesty was to produce an impression upon the royal mind that his ministers had abruptly and unkindly deserted him; and that it was due to himself to make them and the country aware that he would not submit to dictation, let it come from what quarter it might. Accordingly on the 12th, and only on the 12th, his Majesty permitted Mr. Canning to kiss hands as First Lord of the Treasury, and gave him a carte blanche to construct an administration, subject to this single proviso, that Earl Grey should not have any place in it.

As soon as it was known that the King had accepted the resignation of his ministers, and that a new cabinet was about to be formed, with Mr. Canning at its head, it became a matter of consideration with the Duke how far it would be conducive to the public service, as well as consistent with his own honour, to retain the command of the army to which he had lately been appointed. In the eloquent, because manly, speech which he delivered in the House of Lords on the 2nd of June, he himself explains the reasons which led him to the conviction that it would not be becoming in him to retain such command. He there states, that though not necessarily a politician, the commander-in-chief of the British army must always be in close and confidential communication with the ministers of the crown; that the points discussed between them must more or less bear upon every important question of home, colonial, or foreign policy; and that looking to his own position in the country as a peer of parliament and a member of that government which Mr. Canning had just broken up, it would be impossible for him to hold such communications except under great and pain-

ful restraints on both sides. He points out that in this respect there neither was nor could be any similarity between the circumstances of his case and that of his illustrious predecessor. The Duke of York, as a member of the royal family, and next in succession to the throne, had been able and indeed was bound, whatever his individual opinions might be, to hold aloof from party and its influences. Like the reigning sovereign, he was constrained in all matters of general policy to put himself into the hands of the government for the time being; which he might advise in private, which he might even oppose on particular occasions in the House of Lords, but with which he must always act conscientiously and without reserve. It was not so with the Duke of Wellington. Having once taken office in the King's councils, he could not avoid acting henceforth as a party leader in the House of Lords; and it would be unjust towards an administration, with the policy of which he could not hope to agree in parliament, if out of parliament he were to advise with it as to the best means of carrying such policy into effect. After well considering the whole matter, therefore, he came to the conclusion that only one course was open to him. He had resigned, as a matter of course, the master-generalship of the ordnance, to which a seat in the cabinet was attached; and he lost no time in sending in likewise his resignation as commander-in-chief. There was violent clamour in the newspapers, and among Mr. Canning's supporters, as soon as this act on the part of the Duke of Wellington became publicly known. He was charged with base ingratitude to the King and to the country. Indeed harsher things than these were said, of which it is not now worth while to place the details

on record. He bore the storm of abuse on this, as he had done on many previous occasions, with equanimity, and contented himself with replying to it as soon as an opportunity of doing so was afforded in the House of Lords. His speech will be found in Hansard, well reported; and being printed under his own superintendence, it was published as a pamphlet at the time. Though eminently characteristic in the strong language with which it abounds, it contains as complete a vindication of his proceedings and motives as ever was set forth by a public man. We may regret that he should have allowed himself to rail at a corrupt press in the pay of the government; because the press, however worked upon, was no more open to bribery in 1827 than it is now. But in 1827 the Duke could neither write nor speak on that subject in a whisper; for he had not yet learned to understand the true position of the respectable portion of the press and its conductors in this country. But in all that follows he evinces as much ability as good taste. He read his correspondence with Mr. Canning, commenting upon it as he went along, and without committing himself to the principle either of concession or the opposite, vindicated the line which he had felt it his duty to take in reference to the great question of the day. And, last of all, he spoke of his personal gratification when appointed to command the army with which he had been so long and so intimately connected. "But it has been stated," he went on to say, "that I withdrew myself, because his Majesty would not submit to my dictation and threats, in case I should not myself be appointed his minister. And this accusation is most curiously coupled with another, viz.: that his Majesty offered to

make me his minister, and that I refused. My Lords, those know but little of his Majesty who suppose that any man can dare to dictate to him, much less to threaten him. My Lords, his Majesty never offered to make me his minister. His Majesty knew as well as I did, that I was and must be totally out of the question, and I so considered myself, and so stated myself repeatedly. And I was no party to any suggestion that I should be the person to fill the vacancy occasioned by the event we all deplore. Do your Lordships suppose that having raised myself to the highest rank in the profession which I had previously followed from my youth, that having been appointed to the highest situation in that profession,—for I may say I raised myself without indicating any desire to underrate my obligations to my noble and excellent friends the general officers of the army by whom I am surrounded, and still less those which I owe to his Majesty for his most gracious favour and kindness,—I may safely say that his Majesty would not have placed me where I was if I had not rendered some service to the state deserving of his approbation. I say then that having raised myself to such a station in my profession, I could not be desirous of leaving it in order to be appointed to be the head of the government; a situation for which I am sensible I am not qualified, to which moreover neither his Majesty nor the right honourable gentleman, nor any, wish to see me called.

"Do your Lordships think it possible I was not gratified by being restored to my old relations of command over my old friends and companions, and to have attained the power of recommending them to his Majesty for the professional rewards of their services, after having

passed my life in exciting and directing their exertions? Does any man believe that I would give up such a gratification, in order to be appointed to a station to the duties of which I was unaccustomed, in which I was not wished, and for which I was not qualified? As it must be obvious to your Lordships, that not being in the habit of addressing your Lordships, I should have been found, besides other disqualifications, incapable of displaying as they ought to be displayed, or of defending the measures of government as they ought to be defended in this house, by the person thus honoured by his Majesty's confidence. My Lords, I should have been worse than mad had I thought of such a thing."

We have made this long extract from the Duke's speech—a speech which produced a deep impression on the house and on the country, because an ungenerous use was made of it in after times for party purposes. It is the plain, straightforward statement of a man, who had never as yet seriously thought of himself in the light of Prime Minister of England; who had rendered great assistance to his colleagues in the cabinet as an adviser, but who was too modest to aspire of his own accord to become their chief, or to undertake the task of guiding their councils, or of defending their measures in parliament. It proves that having attained to a certain office, which he preferred to the highest civil dignity under the crown, he should have considered himself worse than mad, if he had desired to exchange it for another to which his personal inclinations did not lead him; but that is a very forced interpretation which accepts terms of mere conventionality as a formal acknowledgment either that he felt himself to be incapable of acting as First Lord of the Treasury, or

that if called upon to do so in a moment of difficulty or danger, he would hesitate about sacrificing personal inclination to duty. The Duke, however, did not stop there. He showed by reference, not only to negotiations conducted by Lords Wellesley and Moira in 1812—but to the still more appropriate case in which Mr. Canning was himself a party, that Mr. Canning's assumption in the second of his letters was entirely without foundation. "I will now show," said his Grace, "on the best authority possible, that of the right honourable gentleman himself, that the question, Who is to be at the head of the government? might be asked without offence. On the 12th of May, 1812, Mr. Perceval having just been assassinated, Lord Liverpool waited on the right honourable gentleman, by command of his Majesty, then Prince Regent, to invite the right honourable gentleman to become a member of his Majesty's councils. The first question it appears from a memorandum, drawn up by the right honourable gentleman himself, which the right honourable gentleman asked was—'Who is to be the First Lord of the Treasury?' and it does not appear that the noble lord rebuked the right honourable gentleman for asking that question."

We do not deny—it is impossible to deny—that personal feeling entered a good deal into the Duke's line of action at this time, and gave it a bias. He was greatly offended, he believed that he had just cause to be offended, with the manner in which Mr. Canning had conducted his negotiations throughout: and the tone of his letters to the Duke, but especially of the last, appeared to his Grace petulant and unbecoming. All personal feeling apart, however, it is evident, that

men of such opposite temperaments, moral as well as political, could not act together in the same cabinet, the one being subordinate to the other. Had Mr. Canning won his honours, as the Duke conceived, more fairly, his Grace would have still retired from the administration, but he might have hesitated at retiring at the same time from the command of the army. As matters stood he obeyed a strong sense of duty, when he laid all the offices which the crown had conferred upon him at the feet of his sovereign.

There yet remained one point on which to touch; and the Duke disposed of it in few words. He proved that not only had there been no combination among the seceding members of the cabinet, but that with the single exception of Lord Bathurst, each was ignorant that any communication had been made to the other. For a brief space, that is to say, as long as it suited the purposes of the press, to speak of Canning as an injured man, the Duke's defence of his own conduct made, we believe, less impression out of doors than it ought to have done. To the House of Lords it was quite conclusive. Indeed, the representative of the government there, Lord Goderich, frankly admitted that the Duke had behaved throughout the whole transaction with unimpeachable good faith and candour.

It is a matter of history that the resignation of the Duke and his colleagues was followed by the reconstruction of an administration, pledged as its predecessor had been not to make the repeal of Roman Catholic disabilities a government question. An attempt was indeed made by the Whigs to obtain a share, in the distribution of cabinet places; but besides that their coming in would have destroyed the balance of

opinion on that head, there were other and scarcely less cogent reasons, why Mr. Canning should have been slow at that time to coalesce with them. The Whigs desired to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts; Mr. Canning, without circumlocution or reserve, announced his determination to maintain them. The Whigs advocated a safe measure of parliamentary reform: Mr. Canning would not approach the subject on any pretext whatever. The cabinet was therefore closed for the present against the Whigs, and Sir John Copley, who had spoken effectively in the late debate, against Sir Francis Burdett's bill for Catholic emancipation, was made Lord Chancellor, as Lord Lyndhurst. Mr. Sturges Bourne became Secretary of State for the Home Department. Lord Dudley and Ward went to the Foreign Office. Mr. Robinson, created Viscount Goderich, took charge of the Colonies. Mr. Canning, in addition to the duties of First Lord of the Treasury, took upon himself those of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Palmerston remained at the War Office with a seat in the cabinet. And the Marquis of Anglesey succeeded the Duke of Wellington as Master-General of the Ordnance. Still the alliance between the Canningites and the Whigs continued. Several minor, yet important and lucrative offices were indeed given to distinguished men of the latter party, as for example the Attorney-Generalship to Mr. Scarlett, and the post of Solicitor-General to Mr. Tindal; but no positive coalition took place. The most curious arrangement of the whole, however, was that which a gentleman, afterwards remarkable for his services in fighting the great battle against reform, got credit for having brought about. The Board of Admiralty was broken up, and his Royal Highness the

Duke of Clarence was appointed to the exalted but obsolete office of Lord High Admiral of England.. So delighted was the author of this scheme with his own handywork that he is said to have congratulated the head of the new government in some such words as these: "There, I have secured your continuance in office through two reigns."

CHAP. IX.

THE DUKE IN OPPOSITION.—MR. CANNING'S CORN BILL.—THE DUKE'S AMENDMENT IN THE LORDS.—THE BILL ABANDONED.—THE WHIGS FALL OFF FROM MR. CANNING.—HE LOSES HEART.—STATE OF GREECE.—DEATH OF MR. CANNING.—LORD GODERICH MINISTER.—BATTLE OF NAVARINO.—INTERNAL DIFFERENCES IN THE GOVERNMENT.—LORD GODERICH RESIGNS.—THE DUKE PRIME MINISTER.—MR. HUSKISSON'S SPEECH AT LIVERPOOL.—NOTICED BY THE DUKE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

1827—1828.

For the first time in his public life, the Duke now took his seat in the House of Lords on the left of the throne. He did not, however, throw himself, as other Tory peers did, into violent opposition. On the contrary, his demeanour was uniformly calm, reserved, and dignified, as became one who had already attained to the highest honours in the state, and had nothing to desire except the welfare of the state itself. To the frequent onslaughts on the political character of the new premier, in which some of his brother peers indulged, he gave no encouragement; and as the Whigs abstained from pressing Mr. Canning from behind—as, indeed, they went so far in their complacency as to support him in retaining the stamp duty on newspapers, which they had violently resisted in 1819,—and as by these means questions of vital importance fell generally into abeyance, the Duke did not find, he certainly never went out of his way to seek, occasions to provoke a party contest. At last,

however, an opportunity was presented to him of asserting what he held to be a great principle in legislation, and he did not turn away from it.

It will be recollected that on the 1st of May, a corn bill went through its second reading in the House of Commons which had been prepared while Lord Liverpool was at the head of the administration, and which, but for his lordship's illness, would have been introduced simultaneously into both houses. It effected considerable changes in the regulations heretofore in force with respect to the importation of corn from abroad ; and it fixed the amount of duty at which, in certain states of the market, bonded corn might be released. The Duke, who had not been consulted in the preparation of this bill, regarded it as open to some objection, on the ground that it had so fixed the rate of averages, that a few holders of bonded corn could at any moment produce a forced rise in the price, and thereby find the means of inundating the market with bonded corn. Whether his Grace was right or wrong in this conclusion, it is not our business to determine ; but believing himself to be right, he set about remedying the defect in the bill, in the same spirit of candour and fairness which guided his proceedings on all similar occasions. He drew up a clause which declared that corn in bond should not be let loose till the average price in the market reached 70*s*., and that before individual speculators could be permitted to avail themselves of such average, they should obtain the assent in writing of other traders, similarly circumstanced with themselves.

Having no party object in view, but desiring merely what he professed to seek, an improvement in the government measure, the Duke permitted the bill to go

through its second reading in the Lords, and then, before the house went into committee, he sent his own clause to Mr. Huskisson, requesting him to consider and give his opinion upon it. In due course Mr. Huskisson returned the clause, writing at the same time a long letter in a spirit of most friendly criticism. He pointed out what he believed to be the inconveniences which must result from the adoption of the Duke's scheme in its present form, adding that he doubted whether it could be so altered as to prove other than fatal to the bill. At the same time he suggested a change, and did so in the following words: — "Had your proposal been, that no corn bonded after the passing of the present bill, should be allowed to be entered for home consumption till the average price reached 66*s*., and that thenceforth all corn so bonded, or thereafter imported, should come under the regulations of the bill, individually I should not object to such a proviso."

The Duke understood this suggestion as ninety-nine out of a hundred readers of the letter would have probably done, to imply that Mr. Huskisson would have been satisfied with the clause, had it taken 66*s*. instead of 70*s*. as the average, and fixed that price as the line, after passing which, corn should be admitted into the market for home consumption. Not being wedded to his own scale, the Duke adopted the lower rate, as Mr. Huskisson had fixed it, and this clause in its altered form was proposed, and after a good deal of discussion adopted by the committee. But here again there occurred an incident similar to that which gave its tone to the Duke's correspondence with Mr. Canning, in the previous April. Before submitting his clause to the committee, the Duke had shown it with Mr. Huskisson's

letter to Lord Goderich, and Lord Goderich agreed with the Duke in believing that his clause, altered according to the suggestion of Mr. Huskisson, had received that gentleman's approval. The president of the Board of Trade, however, like the chief under whom he served, seems to have been either very careless or very peculiar in his manner of expressing himself on paper. Finding that the course which he was assumed to have sanctioned was not satisfactory to his colleagues, he wrote to explain that no compromise was thought of, and that the Duke had affixed to his letter a meaning which he never intended it to bear. It would occupy too much space were we to transcribe in full the correspondence which ensued upon this remonstrance. We content ourselves therefore with stating, that the question between the Duke and Mr. Huskisson turned entirely on the proper sense to be affixed to the words : " and that thenceforth all corn so bonded, &c." The Duke believed that they applied to corn bonded after the passing of the bill. Mr. Huskisson contended that they referred exclusively to the price fixed in the new clause. It is not for us to say whether the Duke misunderstood Mr. Huskisson or not; we only know that the interpretation put by the latter upon his own words, appears on the face of it to be much more forced than that which they received from the Duke. Be this however as it may, there was surely nothing in the Duke's manner of proceeding to justify the outcry which the ministers and their friends immediately endeavoured to raise against him. His conduct, so far from being factious, was both considerate and friendly. He consulted the highest commercial authority in the cabinet before he made an attempt to improve the bill, and

substituted for his own terms those which he believed to have been suggested by the statesman with whom he was in correspondence. He could not possibly count upon ministers throwing up their own bill, because in committee a clause had been added to it; and regarding that clause as one of great importance, it was not his business to withhold it in order to save the bill. Such, however, was the course which the government considered it expedient to pursue. Being beaten in committee by a majority of four, they endeavoured on the third reading to get rid of the Duke's clause; and when again defeated by a majority of eleven, they withdrew their bill.

Except in this instance, there was no direct collision between Mr. Canning's administration and the opposition on any important point of domestic policy. Professing to entertain the same earnest desire as ever to repeal the laws affecting Roman Catholics, Mr. Canning carefully avoided committing himself as head of the government to any measure bearing on that question.

This might be a trial to the Whigs, but they bore it patiently, and even the Catholic Association became more moderate in its proceedings. In like manner, Parliamentary Reform and the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts were hung up as if by common consent. Once, and once only, the strength of Mr. Canning's position was tried, and it failed him. In the course of the late election, when party spirit ran high, bribery had prevailed to a considerable extent, and against two small boroughs, Penryn and East Retford, the charge was brought so home, that to pass the matter wholly by was felt to be impossible. A bill was accordingly brought in by government to extend

the franchise in both cases to the neighbouring hundreds—"A mitigated penalty," as Mr. Canning observed, "suited to the nature of the offence proved; although in more flagrant cases, such as Grampound, he should not hesitate to vote for total disfranchisement." It was an occasion on which the Whigs could not, without an entire abandonment of principle, remain neutral. Headed by Lord Milton and Mr. Brougham they insisted on the total disfranchisement of Penryn, and an amendment to that effect was carried by a majority of 124 to 69. Mr. Canning saw and was deeply affected by the helplessness of his position after this vote. He had separated himself unkindly from the friends of his youth, and now found that the new connections which he had formed were prepared not to support but to use him for their own purposes. He seems to have lost from that hour all hope of being able to play to a successful issue the hazardous game which he had undertaken.

Mr. Canning's defeat on the present motion was the more to be wondered at, that the long expected fusion of the Whigs with his own party had actually taken place. The Marquis of Lansdowne was already Secretary of State for the Home Department. The Mastership of the Mint had been conferred on Mr. Tierney; and Mr. Abercromby was Judge-Advocate General. For Mr. Brougham alone, of the great leaders of the opposition, there had been found no place; and it is just possible that this circumstance may have induced him to head the attack upon the corrupt boroughs. But however this may be, Mr. Canning found himself in a minority on a question of no trivial importance, and the iron entered into his soul.

Meanwhile the Greek insurrection had been marked at every stage with excessive cruelties on both sides, and very varied success. Latterly, indeed, the tide seemed to have set in strongly on the side of the Turks. Missolonghi had fallen, the Acropolis was reduced, and only among the mountains of the Morea were scattered bands of insurgents able to hold together. It was at this juncture in the strife that England, Russia, and France determined to interfere. Already in 1826, the Duke had settled at St. Petersburg certain terms with the czar, upon which Turkey should be urged to cease her hostilities in Greece. She was to retain a feudal superiority over that country, and to receive a moderate tribute; but Greece was to elect her own rulers, and as regarded all acts of internal administration to become an independent power. Even when her own affairs were at the lowest, Turkey evaded these propositions, and now that her arms were everywhere triumphant, she formally, and in a long and elaborate paper, rejected them. The Allies were thus left free to follow their own devices, and on the 6th of July the ministers of Russia, France, and England signed a treaty, whereby these three powers bound themselves to put a stop to a contest not only disgraceful to humanity from the cruelties which accompanied it, but fatal to the commerce of the Levant. Their representatives at Constantinople were instructed to make known this determination to the Porte, and to demand an armistice, under the threat that the Allies, if refused, would be driven to take measures for the accomplishment of their own objects. Not yet, however, was the obstinacy of the Porte overcome. The ministers of the Christian powers were referred to the paper already

issued, while the shores of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles were put in a posture of defence.

There were at this time squadrons of observation belonging to the three powers in the Mediterranean; that of England being under the command of Admiral Sir Edward Codrington. These were instructed to put a stop as well as they could to the atrocities that were going on. But Turkey was bent on finishing the war in her own way, and a large fleet arriving from Constantinople in the Bay of Navarino, it was soon afterwards joined by the Egyptian squadron. We are not writing the history of the Greek revolt, and need not, therefore, describe the process by which the allied admirals endeavoured to frustrate the plans of Ibrahim Pacha. Enough is done when we state that Ibrahim doggedly refused to take orders except from his own government; that having failed to elude the vigilance of the Allies, he was brought back to Navarino from which he had sailed; and that on the 20th of October that fatal action was fought which destroyed utterly the Turkish marine, and did the work of Russia.

Long before these events came to pass, however, Mr. Canning had ended his administration with his life. On the 2nd of July the parliament was prorogued, and broken in health and spirits, he retired to the Duke of Devonshire's seat at Chiswick. There, on the 8th of August, in the same chamber where Fox had breathed his last, he expired; worn out with the cares of an office which it had been the ambition of his whole life to attain, and which he did attain, but only by sacrificing everything which to a man of keen feeling and sensitive genius could render life worth keeping. The death of Mr. Canning seemed to remove

whatever of bitterness might have remained in the disposition of his late colleagues, and the Duke in particular showed himself ready to give a fair measure of support to any administration which the King might call into existence. When, therefore, Lord Goderich acceded to the Treasury, his Grace readily consented to resume the command of the army, though he declined (if indeed any proposal of the sort was made to him) to join the administration. It soon became apparent, however, that the new administration, whether opposed or supported by the Duke, could not last long. It was composed of materials which were without any principle of cohesion, and the great effort on all sides seemed to be, not to reduce the differences which stood in the way of unanimity, but to bring them to an issue.

The first difficulty with which the new government had to grapple, arose out of the success of the allied arms at Navarino. There was not a thoughtful statesman in either House of Parliament but deprecated that issue; and it was generally understood that as soon as parliament came together, the ministers would be taken severely to task for the blunder which they had committed. But other and still more troublesome questions arose within the cabinet itself. Lord Goderich had selected for his Chancellor of the Exchequer in the room of Mr. Canning, Mr. Herries, who had held office as Secretary to the Treasury under Lord Liverpool. Now this was a severe disappointment to the Whigs, who counted, without fail, on securing that place for one of themselves. Indeed, so much was it taken to heart, that Lord Lansdowne tendered his resignation, and was with difficulty held back from pressing for its

acceptance. Then followed a succession of bickerings and cabals, of which it is not our business to give an account; but which threatened, as is well known, on more than one occasion, to break up the government. At last, just before it became the duty of ministers to meet parliament, a circumstance occurred which rendered it impossible any longer to avert the catastrophe.

In pursuance of the determination which had been arrived at during the previous session, it was resolved to appoint a finance committee, and it became the duty of the government to select a member of the House of Commons to preside over it. The Whig section of the cabinet made choice of Lord Althorpe; and Mr. Tierney, without any previous consultation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed that distinguished nobleman to Lord Goderich. His lordship appears to have given a somewhat loose assent, but still an assent, to the suggestion. He stated, indeed, by-and-by, when the time for parliamentary explanations arrived, that he had expressed in so doing, only his own individual feelings; but that he desired Mr. Tierney, before any decisive steps were taken, to consult those members of the administration who had seats in the House of Commons. This Mr. Tierney appears not to have done, so far, at least, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was concerned, for Mr. Herries became acquainted with the arrangement only by accident, during a chance interview with Mr. Huskisson, at the Colonial Office. Now, as a finance committee must necessarily deal with questions which more concern the Chancellor of the Exchequer than any other member of the administration, Mr. Herries naturally felt that he had not been fairly dealt with in the matter; that something, indeed, very like

a slight had been put upon him by the selection of a chairman without any reference whatever to his wishes or views in regard to the individual on whom the selection should fall.

It is a curious circumstance, that in the correspondence which followed, Mr. Huskisson should have again taken a line, of which, to use a very mild expression, it is not too much to say, that it did not run quite straight. Whether he was in Mr. Tierney's confidence from the outset may be uncertain, but there can be no doubt of the fact, that in spite of his old connection with Mr. Herries, he never once opened his mind to that gentleman till after Lord Althorpe had been communicated with. It is equally certain, that when Mr. Herries announced to Lord Goderich his intention, in the event of Lord Althorpe's appointment, to retire from the administration, Mr. Huskisson informed his lordship that if Lord Althorpe were not appointed, he must resign. Nor must we omit to notice another peculiarity in this case. When Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Herries made their respective statements to the House of Commons, Mr. Huskisson hazarded the assertion, that Mr. Herries had been, from the first, aware of the proposed arrangement with respect to Lord Althorpe, a statement which Mr. Herries, in plain terms, pronounced to be incorrect. Finally, by some strange perversion of mind, both Lord Goderich and Mr. Huskisson seem to have imagined that Mr. Herries, when he talked of resigning, was not in earnest. How this came about it is difficult to conceive, for there was no ambiguity in his mode of expressing himself, whether orally or in writing. Hence Lord Goderich and Mr. Huskisson agreed between themselves that the

threatened resignation of the latter should not be communicated to Mr. Herries till Lord Goderich had used every possible expedient to reconcile that gentleman to the proposed arrangement. It is not, however, necessary to go farther into the detail of matters with which the subject of this memoir was in no way mixed up. Suffice it to state that Mr. Herries declined to accept Lord Althorpe as chairman of the finance committee, and that Lord Goderich, who had long found himself unable to preserve harmony among his colleagues, made up his mind to quit the administration.

The King was at Windsor while these cabals in the cabinet were going on. His Majesty received Lord Goderich there on the 8th of January, 1828, and accepting his resignation, sent at once for the Duke of Wellington. In after years the Duke used to describe that interview with great glee. His Majesty, it appeared, had long been aware of the want of concord which prevailed among his ministers *; he was not therefore surprised when one after another, they presented themselves before him with the seals of office in their hands. But there either was, or there seemed to him to be,

* Mr. Raikes, in his Journal, gives the following account of this little matter, which agrees in the main with the impressions made on our own memory: "When he sent for me to form a new administration in 1828, he was then severely ill, though he would never allow it. I found him in bed, dressed in a dirty silk jacket, and a turban nightcap, one as greasy as the other; for notwithstanding his coquetry about dress in public, he was extremely dirty and slovenly in private. The first words he said to me were, 'Wellington, the cabinet is defunct,' and then he began to describe the manner in which the late ministers had taken leave of him, on giving in their resignations. This was accompanied by the most ludicrous mimicry of the voice and manner of each individual, so strikingly like, that it was quite impossible to refrain from fits of laughter."

something irresistibly comic in the air with which they severally approached him; and being an excellent mimic, his Majesty kept the Duke in roars of laughter, by describing after the manner of Mathews, the dialogues which ensued. His Majesty had, however, more important matters in hand than the sort of by-play of which we are speaking. He pointed out to the Duke that there was no public man except himself who possessed moral influence enough, amid the complications and difficulties of the times, to form a strong government:—and he urged his Grace to waive whatever personal scruples he might entertain, and to take upon himself the responsibilities of office. Such an appeal went to the very core of the principle on which the whole tenor of the Duke's public life had been founded. His sovereign required his services, and it was not for him to oppose his own inclinations to the call of duty. He accepted the trust, returned to town next day, and entered into immediate communication with Mr. Peel on the subject of it.

The vulgar notion of the Duke's political character is, that he was a mere bigot and an obstructive. If other proof were wanting of the gross inaccuracy of this opinion, it might be found, one would imagine, in the arrangements which he made on the present occasion. Instead of gathering round him the Tory section of Lord Liverpool's administration, he invited all, except the pure Whig members of Lord Goderich's cabinet to become his colleagues. They accepted the invitation with a readiness which, while it deeply offended the retiring ministers and their friends, occasioned almost as much surprise as satisfaction to the Duke. The new administration accordingly stood thus:—The Duke of

Wellington, resigning the command of the army, which was handed over to Lord Hill, became First Lord of the Treasury; Mr. Peel succeeded Lord Lansdowne at the Home Office, and became leader of the House of Commons; Lord Lyndhurst retained the great seal; Mr. Huskisson was reappointed Secretary of State for the Colonies; Lord Dudley and Ward remained at the Foreign Office; Mr. Goulburn became Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the room of Mr. Herries, who took Mr. Tierney's place at the Mint; Mr. Grant resumed his place at the Board of Control, and Lord Palmerston returned to the War Office; Lord Anglesey became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with Mr. Lamb as his chief secretary; while Sir James Scarlett resigned the post of Attorney-General in favour of Sir Charles Wetherel. All this abundantly vindicated the Duke's determination not to stop short in the course of safe and gradual amelioration of the commercial and fiscal policy of the country, on which Lord Liverpool's administration had entered; while it satisfied the Tory party, then the most powerful in the kingdom, that nothing would be done to affect injuriously the fundamental principles of the constitution.

It soon appeared, however, that there was a section in the cabinet which did not feel quite at ease under the new order of things. Mr. Huskisson and his friends felt keenly the sarcasms which were cast upon them from the opposition benches, and were not always ready with an answer to the question, "How could you consent to serve under a man, who carried his hostility to your great leader and patron so far, as to throw up the command of the army in order that he might be the more free to oppose him in the House of Lords?" Doubt-

less it was the distraction occasioned by these taunts which led Mr. Huskisson into a repetition of the blunders which twice before had placed him in a false light with his colleagues and with the public. He took occasion, for example, on the hustings at Liverpool, whither he went down for re-election, to say that he had accepted office under the Duke of Wellington only on conditions; or, to use his own expression, that the Duke had given him a guarantee that the liberal policy of which he claimed to be the originator should be persevered in; and that in consequence of this guarantee he had consented to join the cabinet. Now the Duke was not the sort of man to sit patiently under the charge, that in order to complete his arrangements he had been obliged to come under obligations to any one. He therefore seized an opportunity to state, in reply to Lord Eldon in the House of Lords, that his lordship's reference to a speech of Mr. Huskisson's on the hustings must be founded in error, for that he had given no pledge or guarantee to Mr. Huskisson or anybody else, in regard to the future policy of the government. "Is it to be supposed," said the Duke, "that the right honourable gentleman, to whom I understand the noble earl to allude, would have used the expressions ascribed to him at the Liverpool election? If my right honourable friend had entered into any such corrupt bargain, as he was stated to describe, he would have tarnished his own honour as much as I should have disgraced mine. No guarantee was required, and none was given, on my part."

The Duke's speech was calm, temperate, and sufficiently tender of the feelings of the person most seriously affected by it; but it was firm. Mr. Huskisson seems

to have writhed a little under it, yet he could neither refute the correctness of its statements, nor find fault with its tone. On the contrary, he lost no time in explaining, after resuming his seat in the House of Commons, that his meaning had been misunderstood; that in speaking of guarantees he did not intend the inference to be drawn that anything like a compact had been entered into between the head of the government and himself, but merely that in contemplating the *personnel* of the Duke's administration, he found a sufficient guarantee that no violent change of policy could be intended. The House received this explanation, as it receives most statements of the kind, good-naturedly, and to all outward appearance the wound was skinned over. But it still festered beneath the surface, and another incident which occurred not long afterwards, dissolved for ever a confidence which from the first seems to have been but imperfectly rendered on both sides.

CHAP. X.

EAST RETFORD AND PENRYN DIFFICULTY. — CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. HUSKISSON. — MR. HUSKISSON, LORD DUDLEY, AND LORD PALMERSTON RETIRE FROM THE DUKE'S ADMINISTRATION, AND ARE SUCCEEDED BY SIR GEORGE MURRAY, MR. VESEY FITZGERALD, AND SIR HENRY HARDINGE.

1828.

NOTICE was taken in a previous chapter of the corruption which had been practised at the last general election, in the boroughs of Penryn and East Retford; and of the course which Mr. Canning declared himself prepared to adopt in regard to them. Opposed as he was to any radical change in the constitution of Parliament, he refused to disfranchise either borough: but he brought in a bill to extend the right of voting for Penryn to the surrounding hundred, and took time to consider what should be done in the case of East Retford. The feeling in the house was however very strong against Penryn. An amendment was therefore moved for the total disfranchisement of that place, and for the transference of its members to Manchester:—and it was carried to the second reading by a majority which increased rather than diminished after the bill came out of committee. Though a good deal annoyed, Mr. Canning took this check well, and the cabinet seeing how the tide was setting in, agreed that both then and for the future, one out of every two boroughs convicted of

corruption, should forfeit its privileges, and that the members thereby rendered disposable should be given to large towns.

The bill for the disfranchisement of Penryn was in the House of Lords when the Duke of Wellington acceded to office. It passed the first reading, but before being carried to a second, a petition was presented by the electors, to be heard at the bar of the House by counsel, and after some discussion, the prayer of the petition was granted. This led, as a matter of course, to a reconsideration, in the cabinet, of the line which it would be proper to adopt in regard to East Retford, which according to Mr. Canning's arrangement, was so far safe, that in event of the lords assenting to the disfranchisement of Penryn, the worst that could happen would be, that the privileges of East Retford would be shared by the neighbouring hundred of Bassetlaw. All proceedings in the cabinet are very properly kept secret; but there seems to be reason for believing, that in the particular discussion which ensued, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel took one side, and Mr. Huskisson and his friends another. The Duke and Mr. Peel, looking to the turn which things were taking in reference to the Penryn question before the House of Lords, are understood to have advocated the disfranchisement of East Retford, and the transference of its members to Birmingham. Mr. Huskisson conceiving that he was in honour bound to adhere to Mr. Canning's arrangement, argued in favour of the milder measure of throwing open the franchise, and carried his point.

Having come to this conclusion, the ministers produced their bill, and were met, as in the case of Penryn, with a counter proposal. The House was invited to

disfranchise East Retford entirely, and to give its members to Birmingham. Among those who spoke in defence of the ministerial measure, Mr. Huskisson made himself conspicuous by the candour with which he gave his reasons for the course which he felt it his duty to pursue. He did not consider that it would be wise to weaken too much or too suddenly the agricultural interest in the country, and was therefore indisposed to give all at once four members to manufacturing towns. But he added, that if there had been only one delinquent borough to deal with, he should have certainly voted for its disfranchisement, and for conferring upon a large town the rights which it had forfeited.

These expressions were made use of at the first reading of the bill, and the reading was carried. Meanwhile, the inquiry before the Lords went forward, and according to the evidence produced, so good a case was made out for Penryn, that doubts began to be entertained as to the justice of depriving the borough of its privileges. The House, however, had not come to any decision when the day appointed for the second reading of the East Retford Bill arrived; nor had Mr. Huskisson expressed himself in the cabinet as shaken in his determination respecting the future of that borough. Indeed, the waverers, if there were any, seem to have been the Duke and Mr. Peel; for the latter spoke to a friend, who walked with him to the House of Commons, of his disinclination in the present aspect of affairs, to persist in pleading for the constituency of East Retford. But though Mr. Huskisson seems not to have given utterance to his thoughts, they evidently ran in the same channel as those of Mr. Peel, with this remarkable difference in the issues to which they severally led;

that Mr. Peel, while lamenting the necessity by which he felt himself bound, yielded to it; whereas Mr. Huskisson broke through the restraints of official duty, at the bidding of a stronger, though a personal impulse.

The second reading was proposed on the 19th of May, and an animated debate ensued. The chief speakers on the ministerial side were Mr. Peel and Mr. Huskisson; on the side of the amendment, Mr. Sturges Bourne and Lord Sandon. The latter, in the course of his address, alluded pointedly to the inquiry which was then going on elsewhere, in the matter of Penryn, — and assuming that disfranchisement would certainly not take place, called upon Mr. Huskisson to redeem his pledge, and to vote with the opposition. Mr. Huskisson's reply opened new ground. It hinted at the desirableness of delay till the decision of the House of Lords should be officially communicated, a proposal which, when he sat down, he repeated in still more direct terms to Mr. Peel. Neither Mr. Peel, however, nor any other of his colleagues, except Lord Palmerston, appears to have suspected that Mr. Huskisson did not intend to support with his vote the measure, which as a speaker, he had recommended. Such, however, proved to be the fact. A division took place, and Mr. Huskisson and Lord Palmerston, very much to the astonishment of all parties, went into the lobby against the ministerial proposal.

The division took place about midnight, and its results were at once communicated to the Duke. Whatever he might have been disposed to do or to recommend, no time was afforded for consultation with his colleagues. For about ten o'clock in the morning

of the 20th he received the following letter from Mr. Huskisson:—

[Private and confidential.]

"Downing Street, May 20.
"2 o'clock, A.M.

"My dear Duke,—After the vote which, in regard to my own consistency and personal character, I have found myself in the course of this evening's debate compelled to give on the East Retford question, I owe it to you as the head of the administration, and to Mr. Peel, as the leader of the House of Commons, to lose no time in affording you an opportunity of placing my office in other hands, as the only means in my power of preventing the injury to the King's service which may ensue from the appearance of disunion in His Majesty's councils, however unfounded in reality, or however unimportant in itself, the question which may have given rise to that appearance."

The Duke read this letter with the feelings which would have presented themselves to any other high-minded man circumstanced as he then was, and replied to it out of hand in the following terms:—

"London, May 20.

"My dear Huskisson,—Your letter of two this morning, which I received at ten, has surprised me much, and has given me great concern. I have considered it my duty to lay it before the King."

Mr. Huskisson's astonishment at finding such a prompt and decisive line of proceeding adopted appears

to have been intense. It would seem as if he had not read his own letter in the sense which the Duke affixed to it. At all events, he put the Duke's answer into the hands of Lord Dudley, who happened to be with him when it arrived, and asked his opinion how, under the circumstances, it behoved him to act. We are not in a position to place on record the advice which Lord Dudley gave; but when Mr. Huskisson went on to say that nothing could be further from his own intentions than voluntarily to retire from the cabinet; his lordship replied "That the Duke was evidently under a different impression, and that the mistake ought at once to be rectified." He then proposed to call upon the Duke and to explain. The proposal was at once accepted, and Lord Dudley proceeded to Apsley House, where the Duke saw him. But the conference proved less satisfactory in its result than his lordship had anticipated. The Duke would receive no explanation at second hand. He calmly but resolutely contended, that only one interpretation could be put upon a document so expressed, and wound up with the well known words, "There is no mistake, there can be no mistake, and there shall be no mistake." Strange to say, even this message did not suggest to Mr. Huskisson the line of conduct which it would become him to adopt. He still misunderstood his position, and commissioned Lord Palmerston to wait upon the Duke, and to say, "That Mr. Huskisson was surprised at not being called upon to explain the circumstances under which he had voted the previous evening, and to add, that he was perfectly ready to afford such explanation, should it still be required." The Duke met Lord Palmerston's suggestion as he had done that of Lord Dudley. He did not know

what explanation was necessary, or see how it could be called for by him. Mr. Huskisson, having broken faith with the other members of the administration, had made the only reparation in his power by retiring from office. Mr. Huskisson, however, was of a different way of thinking, and he wrote in consequence the following letter to his Grace:—

"Downing Street, May 20, 1828.
"Half-past 6 o'clock, P.M.

"My dear Duke,—Having understood from Lord Dudley and Lord Palmerston that you had laid my letter of last night before the King under a different impression from that which it was intended to convey, I feel it due both to you and to myself to say, that my object in writing that letter was not to express any intention of my own, but to relieve you from any delicacy which you might feel towards me; if you should think that the interests of his Majesty's service would be prejudiced by my remaining in office after giving a vote, in respect to which, from the turn which the latter part of the debate had taken, a sense of personal honour left me no alternative."

The incidents in the debate to which Mr. Huskisson alluded in this letter, were two speeches, one delivered by Mr. Sturges Bourne, the other by Lord Sandon. The last speaker in particular assuming the fact, that the Penryn bill must be lost in the Lords, observed "that he recollected that the Secretary to the Colonies had said, that if there were only one case before the House, he would have no hesitation in transferring the franchise in this instance to Birmingham. He there-

fore claimed the vote of the Secretary for the Colonies, and he claimed it on the very ground on which his right honourable colleague had rested the defence of his own consistency." But granting that Mr. Huskisson would have been justified, after the rejection of the Penryn bill, in turning round upon his own proposal with regard to East Retford, the Duke could not see, and would not allow, that he had any right to do so till, first, the rejection of the Penryn bill had become a matter of fact, and next, till the cabinet should have had an opportunity of discussing the question with him. His Grace, therefore, declined once more to enter into explanations, and wrote as follows: —

"London, May 20, 1828.

My dear Huskisson,—I have received your letter of this evening. I certainly did not understand your letter of two this morning as offering me any option; nor do I understand the one of this evening as leaving me any, except that of submitting myself and his Majesty's Government to the necessity of soliciting you to remain in your office, — or of incurring the loss of your valuable assistance to his Majesty's service. However sensible I may be of this loss, I am convinced that in these times any loss is better than that of character, which is the foundation of public confidence. In this view of the case, I have put out of it altogether every consideration of the discredit resulting from the scene of last night, of the extent of which you could not but have been sensible, when you thought proper, as a remedy for it, to send me the offer of placing your office in other hands."

Not yet silenced, Mr. Huskisson wrote again on the following day: —

"Colonial Office, May 21, 1828.

"My dear Duke, — In justice to myself I cannot acquiesce for a moment in the construction which your letter of last night puts upon my conduct; you cannot refuse to me the right of knowing the motives of my own actions, and I solemnly declare, that in both my letters I was actuated by one and the same feeling. It was simply this, that it was not for me, but for you, as head of the government, to decide, how far my vote made it expedient to remove me from his Majesty's service. I felt that I had no alternative consistent with personal honour, in a difficulty not of my own seeking or creation, but to give that vote; that the question in itself was of minor importance, that the disunion was more in appearance than reality. But I also felt that you might possibly take a different view of it, and that in case you should, I ought, as I had done on a similar occasion with Lord Liverpool, to relieve you from any difficulty arising out of personal consideration towards me, in deciding upon a step to which you might find it your public duty to resort on the occasion. It was under this impression alone, that I wrote to you immediately on my return from the House of Commons.

"If you had not misconceived that impression as well as the purport of my second letter, I am persuaded that you could not suppose me guilty of the arrogance of expecting that you and his Majesty's Government, should 'submit yourselves to the necessity of soliciting me to remain in office,' or do me the injustice of believing that I could be capable of placing you in

the alternative of choosing between the continuance of my services such as they are, and the loss to your administration of one particle of character, which I agree with you is the foundation of public confidence.

"If understanding my communication as I intended it to be understood, you had in any way intimated to me, either that the occurrence, however unfortunate, was not one of sufficient moment to render it necessary for you to act in the manner in which I had assumed that you might possibly think it necessary to act, or that you were under that necessity, in either case there would have been an end of the matter. In the first supposition I should have felt that I had done what in honour and fairness towards you I was bound to do, but it never would have entered my imagination that I had claimed or received any sacrifice whatever from you or any member of his Majesty's Government. On the other hand, nothing can be further from my intention than to express an opinion, that the occasion was not one in which you might have fairly considered it your duty to have advised his Majesty to withdraw from me the seals of office on account of this vote. I do not therefore complain, but I cannot allow that my removal should be placed on any other ground; I cannot allow that it was my own act, still less can I admit, that when I had no other intention than to relieve the question on which you had to decide from any personal embarrassment, this step on my part should be ascribed to feelings the very reverse of those by which alone I was actuated, either towards you or his Majesty's Government."

This, it must be allowed, was not, under the circumstances, either a well-timed or a happily expressed

communication. It produced no effect upon the Duke except to render him less than ever disposed to carry the discussion farther; and he therefore wrote what he expected, and perhaps desired should be, a final letter in reply: —

"London, May 21, 1828.

"My dear Huskisson,—In consequence of your last letter, I feel it to be necessary to recall to your recollection the circumstances under which I received your letter of Tuesday morning. It is addressed to me at two o'clock in the morning, immediately after a debate and a division in the House of Commons. It informs me that you lose no time in affording me an opportunity of placing your office in other hands, as the only means in your power of preventing an injury to the King's service, which you describe. It concludes by regretting the necessity for troubling me with this communication.

"Could I consider this in any other light than as a formal tender of the resignation of your office, or that I had any alternative, but either to solicit you to remain in office, contrary to your sense of duty, or to submit your letter to the King?

"If you had called on me the next morning after your vote, and had explained to me in conversation what had passed in the House of Commons, the character of the communication would have been quite different, and I might have felt myself at liberty to discuss the whole subject with you, and freely to give an opinion on any point connected with it. But I must still think that if I had not considered a letter, couched in the terms in which that letter is couched, and received under the circumstances in which I received it,

as a tender of resignation, and had not laid it before the King, I should have exposed the King's government and myself to very painful misconstructions. My answer to your letter will have informed you that it surprised me much, and that it gave me great concern. I must, therefore, consider the resignation of your office as your own and not mine."

It seems marvellous that a gentleman who experienced no humiliation in writing these letters, should have hesitated to go a little further, especially when the Duke gave him a fair opportunity of doing so, by intimating to Lord Dudley, who again waited upon his Grace in reference to this misunderstanding, that Mr. Huskisson was a man of sense, and knew what should be done to settle the whole matter and bring it to an end. As a man of sense, Mr. Huskisson's obvious course was to request leave to withdraw his original letter ; and then, upon the fair grounds of expediency, and the common requirements of duty, the Duke and he might have discussed the unlucky vote, with all the circumstances attendant upon it. This escape out of the difficulty, however, Mr. Huskisson was either too blind to see or too proud to adopt. On the contrary, he wrote again to the Duke, informing him that he had requested an audience of the King, with a view to satisfy his Majesty respecting the real nature of the position in which he felt himself placed. This letter the Duke returned, unopened, by Lord Dudley, who had been commissioned to deliver it. He made at the same time the remark which has just been quoted, "Huskisson is a man of sense," and intimated that till a certain hour in the day he should take no deci-

sive steps to fill up what he must still consider a vacancy in the administration. The Duke's motive for so acting was one of delicacy towards both Mr. Huskisson and himself, for matters had by this time taken a shape with which Mr. Huskisson could not have been acquainted when he wrote the returned letter. His Grace, therefore, conceived that it would be unbecoming in him, under the circumstances, to read the letter, unless especially requested to do so. But no such results followed as he seems to have anticipated. Mr. Huskisson neither wrote again nor called. The hour fixed for receiving a final communication passed away, and the Duke, proceeding to the palace, received his Majesty's commands to offer the Secretaryship of the Colonies to Sir George Murray. He communicated the fact to Mr. Huskisson in the following terms:—

"London, May 25, 1828.

"My dear Huskisson,—It is with great concern that I inform you that I have at last attended his Majesty, and have received his instructions respecting an arrangement to fill your office. I sincerely regret the loss of your valuable assistance in the arduous task in which I am engaged."

Mortified, grieved, probably tormented with something nearly allied to self-reproach, Mr. Huskisson wrote to the Duke as follows:—

"Downing Street, half-past nine, P.M.
May 25, 1828.

"My dear Duke,—Lord Dudley has just sent to me unopened, my letter to you, which I forwarded to

Apsley House about 5 o'clock this afternoon. This letter was written as soon as I was given to understand by Lord Dudley, who called here after an interview with you this morning, that his Majesty had not signified any intention of granting me the honour of an audience. No other mode, therefore, remaining open to me of conveying my sentiments to the King, I address myself to you, for the purpose of bringing before his Majesty, in the shape of a written communication, what I am prevented from stating to his Majesty in person.

"I feel confident that you will not deny me this favour, and you will be satisfied by the contents of the letter (which I now return), that, in writing it, nothing was further from my intention than to intrude myself between you and the arrangements which, upon my removal from office (for such I have considered the result of our correspondence since your letter of the 21st), you have received his Majesty's instructions to make.

"Your letter, communicating this fact, reached me about half-past seven this evening. I thank you for the information, and for the kind manner in which you advert to any feeble assistance which I may have been able to give to your administration, as well as for the expression of the concern with which you have advised his Majesty to place my office in other hands."

The letter to which Mr. Huskisson here alludes, though long and laboured, contains nothing new, either in argument or illustration. We do not therefore consider ourselves bound to transcribe a document which merely reiterates assertions previously made. But the Duke's concluding reply is too valuable to be omitted:—

"London, May 26, 1828.

"My dear Huskisson,—I have received your letter of yesterday, accompanied by another letter from you, dated also yesterday, which I had returned to Lord Dudley, under the impression that I ought not to open it without your previous consent, under the circumstances that existed at the time I received it.

"I have laid both before the King. In answer I have only to repeat that I considered your letter of the 20th as a formal tender of the resignation of your office; and that the circumstance of its being marked 'private and confidential' did not alter the character of the letter, or relieve me from the painful duty of communicating its contents to his Majesty, as I did in person.

"Your subsequent letters did not, according to my understanding of them, convey any disavowal of your intention to tender your resignation. I laid them before his Majesty, and my answers to them, and communicated to Lord Dudley that I had done so.

"The King informed me, I think on Wednesday the 21st, that you had desired to have an audience of his Majesty, and that he intended to receive you on the day but one after; and I did not consider it my duty to advise his Majesty to receive you at an earlier period.

"It is scarcely necessary for me to observe, that your letter of the 20th was entirely your own act, and wholly unexpected by me. If the letter was written hastily and inconsiderately, surely the rational course was for you to withdraw it altogether, and thus release me from the position in which, without any fault of mine, it had placed me, compelling me either to accept the resigna-

tion which it tendered, or to solicit you to continue to hold your office.

"The latter step was, in my opinion, calculated to do me personally, and the King's government, great disservice; and it appeared to me that the only mode by which we could be extricated from the difficulty in which your letter had placed us, was that the withdrawal of your letter should be your spontaneous act, and that it should be adopted without delay.

"The interference of his Majesty pending our correspondence would not only have placed his Majesty in a position in which he ought not to be placed on such a question, but it would have subjected me to the imputation that that interference had taken place at my suggestion or with my connivance.

"I did not consider it my duty to advise his Majesty to interfere in any manner whatever.

"His Majesty informed me this day that he had written to you this morning, appointing an audience in the course of the day."

So ended this remarkable correspondence, which was much commented upon at the time, and which, both immediately and in its more remote consequences, proved of considerable detriment to the public service. Impartial history will, we think, decide that on the part of the Duke of Wellington, it was conducted with characteristic frankness and urbanity. Mr. Huskisson had committed towards his colleagues in the administration an act which must be characterised as nothing short of political treachery. He had been an assenting party, to say the least, in the cabinet to a particular line of action, on a particular question; and having

failed when the decisive moment came to induce his leader in the House of Commons to postpone the consideration of that question, he first spoke in support of the ministerial views, and then voted with the opposition. In the explanation which he subsequently offered in parliament, he endeavoured to show that one of his own speeches on a previous occasion had committed him, and that being appealed to in the terms of that speech by Lord Sandon, he could not without the sacrifice of personal honour remain deaf to that appeal. Now, in the first place, it was not exactly true that on the 19th of May, when Mr. Huskisson gave his vote, the case of only one borough was before parliament. The Lords were still sitting in judgment on Penryn; and though the weight of evidence seemed to be strongly in favour of that borough, their Lordships had given no judgment, nor could any for some days be expected. Moreover, Mr. Huskisson could not but be aware that in the event of the House of Lords refusing to disfranchise Penryn, it was in the power of the cabinet to withdraw their bill affecting East Retford, and to bring in another; or if this course should be considered inconvenient, to substitute in the Lords total for partial disfranchisement, and to propose the very arrangement which would be acceptable to Mr. Huskisson and to the opposition. To allege, therefore, that necessity compelled him to commit a breach of official faith, in order to save his personal honour, was to go beyond the literal facts of the case; for nothing had occurred to bring these principles directly into collision. Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We are far from desiring to insinuate that Mr. Huskisson, in voting as he did, was not acted upon by a consideration of

the strong probabilities of the issue in the Penryn case. It cannot be doubted that these probabilities affected him powerfully. But surely there is an end to all confidence among the members of an administration if they are at liberty to give themselves up in such cases to the influence of probabilities. It appears, therefore, to us that Mr. Huskisson's first mistake was committed when he placed anticipation, however reasonable, in the room of fact. But was this the only motive which had weight with him? Was he not dissatisfied with his own position in the cabinet of one who had refused to serve in any capacity under his friend and early protector? Had not the reproaches of the Whigs galled him? And is it not possible, that without moving him so far as to create a desire to desert or embarrass the Duke, these feelings may have led him unconsciously to think more, at a critical moment, of personal consistency, than of his obligations to the head of the administration of which he was a member?

Without pretending to answer these questions either affirmatively or otherwise, we cannot shut our eyes to the proofs of irresolution, the invariable consequence of acts performed under the pressure of feeling, which characterised the whole of Mr. Huskisson's subsequent proceedings. He writes one letter offering to resign. He writes another intended to show that he had not offered to resign. He makes no proposal to settle the doubt, by withdrawing the original letter, though pretty plainly recommended by his correspondent to do so, but writes again and again to prove that the meaning of his first letter had been misunderstood. Worse, however, remains to be told. Not satisfied with repeating in the House of Commons the sophisms which

run through the whole of his correspondence, he indulged in an unseemly personal attack upon the First Lord of the Treasury, whom he charged with arrogance towards himself, as well as with a desire to conciliate the ultra-Tories by removing him from the cabinet. He was answered on the spot by Mr. Peel in a style of manly yet generous remonstrance, and withdrew from the contest not a little damaged in the estimation even of those who felt his retirement from the government to be a public misfortune.

Mr. Huskisson did not retire alone. Lord Dudley withdrew at the same time from the Foreign Office; Lord Palmerston quitted the War Office; and Mr. Charles Grant ceased to be President of the Board of Control. These gentlemen were succeeded by Lord Aberdeen, who became Foreign Secretary, by Mr. Vesey, afterwards Lord Fitzgerald, who went to the Board of Control, and by Sir Henry, afterwards Lord Hardinge, who became Secretary at War.

CHAP. XI.

THE TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS REPEALED.—CONTESTED ELECTION FOR CLARE COUNTY.—ITS EFFECTS ON THE CATHOLIC QUESTION.—AFFAIRS OF TURKEY AND GREECE, AND PORTUGAL.—THE DUKE CLOSELY EXAMINES THE STATE OF THE CATHOLIC QUESTION, AND ITS EFFECTS ON ALL GOVERNMENT.—HIS VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT.

1828.

Long before this fracas in the cabinet, the government had sustained a reverse, if not a defeat, on a question very important in itself, and still more so when considered in connection with its probable consequences. On the 26th of February, Lord John Russell moved in the House of Commons, "That this house will resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to consider of so much of the acts of the 13th and 25th of Charles the Second, as requires persons before they are admitted into office or place in corporations, or having accepted any office civil or military, or any place of trust under the crown, to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England."

It is worthy of remark that the Acts here specified, called the Test and Corporation Acts, though they still kept their place upon the statute-book, inflicted no real injury upon any portion of his Majesty's subjects. Year by year a bill was brought into parliament, to exempt official persons who might have neglected to receive the holy sacrament from sustaining any damage

in person, property, or privilege therefrom. Still the Acts were regarded by the dissenting interest as a badge of inferiority—by the Church as a bulwark of her supremacy, and the one was as reluctant to give them up as the other was eager to repeal them.

Lord John carried his resolution after a warm debate, by a majority of 44 in a house of 330 members. Every minister present, including Mr. Huskisson and Lord Palmerston, spoke against it. But all, when they saw the turn which matters were taking, rose and quitted the house before the division came on. There followed upon this a line of action, which it is not very easy on the ground of consistency to defend. The cabinet met and came to the conclusion that to resist the proposed measure would be impossible, and that as there was a considerable party in the Church itself to whom the application of a sacramental test for civil office gave offence, it would be better on every account to yield the point. Accordingly the bill for absolute repeal which was brought in, founded upon the previous resolution, passed through its second reading without being opposed. In committee, however, Mr. Peel proposed a clause, requiring from Protestant dissenters a declaration, that they would not make use of their influence in office to injure the Established Church in her rights or property. Lord John would have resisted this clause had he been at the head of a party strong enough to do so with success; but finding that resistance would only endanger the bill, he gave way. And a still further concession was made in the House of Lords, by substituting for a mere declaration, a solemn appeal to the Deity, and by the addition of the words, "On the true faith of a Christian." The Duke sup-

ported both alterations, himself proposing the first; but he objected to the form of oath proposed by Lord Eldon, and besides carrying the bench of bishops with him, had the satisfaction of hearing the Archbishop of York, with the Bishops of Durham, Lincoln, and Chester, speak in his favour.

It was a curious feature in this debate, that the advocates of the bill supported it on the ground that the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts would interpose fresh obstacles in the way of Catholic Emancipation, while its opponents contended that it must necessarily prepare the way for the admission of Roman Catholics into parliament. Among the former it has been said that the Duke ought properly to be classed. We cannot admit the fact, because when the bill was first introduced, his Grace stated plainly, that in giving it his support, he did not pledge himself to any step either on one side or the other, as to the Catholic question. His object in assenting to this measure was simply to do away with the sacramental test, as a qualification for office. At the same time it is fair to acknowledge, that at a future stage in the proceeding, the Duke spoke out with greater apparent energy against concession to the Roman Catholics than he had done on any previous occasion. Thus, when Lord Eldon on the 28th of April proposed to guard against the dangers which he apprehended to the Church from the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, by requiring that every person who should make the declaration should at the same time acknowledge himself to be a Protestant, the Duke withstood the proposal. "There is no person in this house," said his Grace, "whose feelings and sentiments, after long con-

sideration, are more decided than mine are with respect to the Roman Catholic claims, and I must say that until I see a great change in that question, I must oppose it. But no man on the other hand is more determined than I am to give his vote against any proposition, which, like the present, appears to have for its object a fresh enactment against the Roman Catholics."

Here as it seems to us we have the nearest approach to what may be called a statement with mental reservation, which is anywhere to be found throughout the Duke's voluminous sayings and doings. His Grace certainly did not declare in direct terms that he would never consent to repeal the laws of which the Roman Catholics complained; he went no further than to assure the house, that his opinions on the subject remained precisely what they had ever been, and that till he saw a great change in that question, he should continue to oppose repeal. Such change might no doubt be going on at that moment, or it might occur at some subsequent period, in which case, if he considered it expedient to support repeal he would be able to justify the proceeding by reference to his speech of the 21st of April. The fact, however, remains, that whatever suspicions may have darkened some minds, and some as we now know were already darkened by suspicion, the Duke's declaration had the effect which it was probably intended to have, of satisfying the House of Lords, that from him at least there was nothing to be dreaded in the shape of concession to the Roman Catholics.

Scarcely was this point settled ere Sir Francis Burdett, on the 8th of May, moved for a committee

of the whole house, to consider the laws affecting his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects. A sharp debate followed, and Sir Francis carried his motion by six in the same house which during the previous session had thrown out a Roman Catholic relief bill by a majority of four. This was an ominous proceeding, as was that which followed; for Sir Francis Burdett, instead of bringing in a bill, moved that the House should seek a conference with the Lords, and carried his point. A conference was accordingly held on the 19th, the Lords' managers being, Earl Bathurst, the Duke of Devonshire, Earl Grey, the Marquis of Londonderry, the Bishop of Durham, and Lord Colchester. On the 9th of June the Commons' resolution was debated in a full house; and on the 10th, the Duke not only voted, but spoke against it. It is impossible to avoid perceiving, however, that his Grace's language on that occasion was less decided than it used to be. He spoke as a statesman might who would gladly settle a great difficulty if he could, and who was not only willing, but anxious to receive suggestions from any quarter, if they had a tendency to direct him in doing so. Still his vote was recorded against considering the laws which affected his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, and for that session the question of repeal or no repeal was set at rest.

Meanwhile the Finance Committee, which had been the immediate cause of the dissolution of Lord Goderich's administration, sat, and with Mr. Peel as its chairman, and Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Tierney among its members, worked harmoniously. Then followed a modified corn law, founded upon the bill which Mr. Canning had brought in, and afterwards, in conse-

quence of the Duke's amendment, abandoned. It established a sliding scale of duty, which beginning with thirty-four shillings, when the average price at home was fifty-two shillings, fell away as wheat became dearer, till at last, on the price attaining to eighty shillings, it disappeared. The bill met with considerable opposition in both houses. The supporters of the agricultural interest complained that the terms were too low; the friends of free trade pronounced them to be too high; but it passed into a law, the Commons approving it by a majority of forty-four, — the Lords deciding in its favour by a majority of forty.

The success of the government in this matter, as well as the expulsion of Scotch bank-notes from circulation in England, formed but a poor compensation for the anxiety and trouble which arose out of the proceedings of the Catholic Association in Ireland. That body which, during Mr. Canning's administration, had in some measure fallen into a state of quiescence, began on the accession of Lord Goderich to agitate as of old; and now that the Tories were once more in power, it appeared to brace itself, so to speak, for a death-struggle. Its organisation was perfect. Orders issued by the central board in Dublin, were repeated in every town and village, and country parish, and received an obedience more prompt, as well as more implicit, than is afforded to the decrees of the most despotic of established governments. If a public meeting was called, thousands flocked from far and near to attend it. If a procession was resolved upon with a view to intimidate, tens of thousands took their places in it, and marched with the regularity of disciplined troops. Every speech uttered, every line written, while it enjoined respect for

the law, breathed open defiance to the government. At last a very bold measure was determined upon by Mr. O'Connell and carried into effect. After proclaiming to the world that there was no statute in existence which disabled a Roman Catholic from sitting in the House of Commons, he avowed his intention of standing for the representation of the county of Clare, which the acceptance, by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, of the presidency of the Board of Control had rendered vacant. His cause was at once taken up by the whole body of Roman Catholics in Ireland. All the old ties which bound landlord and tenant together were broken; every altar in the land, from the Hill of Howth to Cape Clear, became, as Mr. Shiel well expressed it, a tribune. The progress of the agitator to the hustings was a triumph, and after a brief trial of his own weakness, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald withdrew from the contest. It would be impossible to exaggerate the effects of this catastrophe. It inflamed the expectations of the Roman Catholics to madness. It awakened among the Protestants, both of Ireland and of Great Britain, a feeling of bitter indignation and alarm. Brunswick clubs were formed in close union with the Orange lodges, and arms and ammunition were prepared on both sides, with scarcely an attempt at disguise.

The inability of the law as it stood, to reach and put down the evil, had already been demonstrated. It was found impossible to get a jury together which would return a verdict against any of the leaders in the agitation, and to ask for a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,—besides that in the present state of parties there was considerable risk of its being refused,—would have served only to hurry forward a crisis. Mr. Lawless

himself, who had marched about from place to place, with 30,000 or 40,000 men in his train, could only be held to bail : it was considered useless to put him upon his trial. To such a height indeed was menace carried, that the very chiefs of the Association themselves became alarmed, and issued their orders to suspend operations, which were at once obeyed. For already had blood been shed, and the Orangemen of the north, declaring that the government was too weak to protect them, were making ready, with weapons in their hands, to protect themselves.

One of the most remarkable proofs of the excellency of the organisation of which we are speaking is to be found in the fact, that at the bidding of the Central Board, party feuds, quarrels about the occupation of land, family differences, and agrarian outrages ceased. The whole mind of the Irish people seemed to be bent upon one object, and money came in abundantly under the designation of Catholic Rent, from the poorest as well as from the richest members of the Roman Catholic church. It was clear indeed, to all impartial observers, that the presence in the country of a large armed force alone kept the people down ; and even that guarantee against rebellion, looking to the composition of the army, and the efforts of the priests to tamper with it, could not wholly be depended upon.

Such was the general condition of the country, when, on the 28th of July, the government having carried their measures and obtained their supplies, prorogued parliament. The recess, however, proved no season of repose to them. Russia had formally declared war against Turkey, and, though bravely and obstinately resisted, her armies were closing in upon Constantinople.

Though repulsed from before Shumla, and obliged to raise the siege of Silistria, they had reduced Kars, in Asia Minor, and Varna, in Europe. The Turkish navy having been destroyed at Navarino, the Russians were masters of the Black Sea, and the lateness of the season alone prevented them from bringing up large reinforcements, and penetrating to the capital. In Greece, also, the Turkish arms had sustained heavy reverses, for there England and France took open part with the insurgents, and Mahomet Ali was forced to evacuate the country. Indeed a provisional government, with the Count Capo d'Istria at its head, was formed; and it rested with the Allies to determine what shape should ultimately be given to it.

Meanwhile in Portugal a great revolution had occurred. The emperor, Don Pedro, had appointed Don Miguel to be regent, after receiving his assurance that he would marry the young queen when she came of age; and Miguel, after a short and not unsatisfactory visit to England, was established in Lisbon. But Don Miguel was little attached to constitutional government in the abstract, and had no desire to share the throne with his niece. As soon therefore as he found himself free to act, he began to conspire against the existing order of things. His mother, who exercised prodigious influence over him, favoured all his designs; and he was supported by some of the nobility, by almost all the inferior clergy, and by the mob of the capital.

In what all this resulted we need not stop to describe. The Marquis of Chaves, with his armed bands, was recalled from Spain; every constitutionalist officer was weeded out of the army; the chambers were corrupted or overawed, and when they began to show symptoms of

resistance, were dissolved. The corporations of Lisbon and Oporto, whether packed for the occasion or not, presented addresses, inviting Miguel to assume the crown. The rabble of Lisbon did the same, and either voluntarily or by fraud, the names of many respectable and wealthy citizens were attached to the document. Accordingly, on the 3rd of June, 1828, Miguel issued a proclamation in his own name, in which he assumed the regal title, and summoned the Cortes of Lemago to meet; and so the constitutional sovereignty of Donna Maria was for a season overthrown.

The British troops which Canning had sent to Portugal had by this time achieved the purpose of the expedition, and were under orders to return home. It was not thought necessary to countermand these orders; for however little he might approve Don Miguel's proceedings, the Duke adhered to his ancient creed, that England had no business to interfere in the internal strifes or arrangements of foreign nations. On the same principle he refused to sanction any attempt to enter Oporto from the sea, which, having expelled its corporation, declared for Don Pedro, and was in consequence placed by the existing government in a state of blockade. The blockade to be sure, though enforced by the presence of a squadron, did not present any serious obstacles to men who were determined to disregard it; for General Stubbs, with many other distinguished Portuguese officers, made their way from England, to which they had retired, and entered the town. But either the feelings of the nation were with Miguel, or he was much better served than his rivals. His troops moved upon Oporto, they beat the constitutional forces in two skirmishes, and compelled them at last to

evacuate the place. After this Portugal submitted, and England was thronged with fugitives, to whom Spain granted no more than a safe conduct through her territory to Ferol and Corunna.

All these events gave great annoyance to the Duke. They obliged him to withdraw the English minister from Lisbon, though they afforded no pretext in his opinion, for interference by force of arms against the existing government; and the difficulties were complicated when, in September, the young queen, Donna Maria, arrived at Falmouth. She was on her way to Lisbon when intelligence reached her at Gibraltar of the revolution which had occurred in Portugal, and of her uncle's usurpation of the throne. And the Marquis of Saldanha, who had charge of her, carried her to England, there to await further instructions from Brazil.

It appeared to the Duke that there was but one course open to the British government under the circumstances, viz, to afford to the royal exile the hospitality due to her rank, and to recommend that she should be left where she was, in order that advantage might be taken of any counter-revolution which might occur favourable to her in Portugal. But the views of Don Pedro were different. Without waiting for communications from England, he sent instructions for his daughter to return to Brazil; and began to prepare for an expedition against Portugal, with a view to assert her right to the throne by force of arms. Meanwhile Miguel had despatched two expeditions: one against Madeira, which succeeded; the other against the island of Terceira, which failed. This was followed by the assembling of all the Portuguese exiles in England, and the preparation of an armament in Southampton Water,

with the Marquis of Saldanha at its head. Now, though the Duke had, for obvious reasons, refused to interfere so as to prevent the sailing from the Tagus of the expeditions which Don Miguel directed against Madeira and Terceira, he felt that his position was very different in regard to a force assembled and equipped on British soil, for the purpose of acting against the *de facto* government of a country with which England was not at war. The former proceeding would have made Great Britain a party to a struggle with which she had nothing to do, and which made no appeal either to her honour or her interests; the latter would be a complete infraction of the law of nations. General Saldanha was accordingly informed that if his preparations were against Portugal, or with a view to reinforce the queen's garrison of Terceira, the expedition would not be allowed to sail; but that no opposition would be offered to his departure for Brazil, should he desire to proceed thither, and to place himself under the emperor's orders. General Saldanha replied that his purpose was to proceed to Brazil, and to take orders there from the emperor; and his squadron, with all the troops which were embarked in it, was permitted to put to sea.

We need not describe in detail the events which followed. Saldanha steered, not for South America, but for Terceira. He was met, as he approached the coast, by a British squadron, and prevented from landing. He protested and complained, but to no purpose; and then, escorted by the British ships till within three hundred miles of Lizard Point, he returned to Southampton.

Great was the ferment among English liberals of all

shades of opinion in consequence of this, which they described as an act of unparalleled tyranny. Donna Maria became in their estimation the outraged genius of liberty; Don Miguel the impersonation of treachery, cruelty, and despotism. To espouse the cause of the former, and to drive the latter from the throne which he had usurped, was pronounced to be a sacred duty. Calls were made, through the newspapers and at public meetings, on the chivalrous youth of England to arm; and depôts for recruiting were opened at every place where the idle and the dissolute most do congregate. Nor were leaders wanting. Gentlemen who had served in the army and retired from it, accepted commissions from Don Pedro. They walked the streets of London and of country towns in his uniform; while large orders for muskets were given to the gunsmiths of Birmingham, and cartridges were made up and packed for embarkation. This was going further than the Duke, with his notions of political morality, could tolerate. An embargo was laid on every suspected vessel in the Thames and elsewhere, and a proclamation came forth forbidding his Majesty's subjects to contravene the law by taking service under a foreign potentate, except with his Majesty's royal license.

It was while foreign affairs were in this unsatisfactory condition, when the very existence of the Ottoman Empire seemed to be threatened, and Don Miguel, openly countenanced by Spain, and not without the secret approval of France and Austria, appeared about to bring upon Western Europe a war of opinion, that the Duke found himself called upon to take a statesman's view of the hindrances to good government which prevailed at home, and to devise some means of

removing them. The trade of the country had not yet recovered from the shock which it received in 1825, and in spite of the reductions which his Grace had made, and was still making, in the army and navy, and civil service in general, taxation pressed heavily upon an impoverished people. This would have been bad enough had it stood alone, but it did not stand alone; for not only was the government become powerless to maintain order and enforce obedience to the laws, but the legislature itself was brought to a dead lock through the bitterness with which party spirit prevailed in both Houses of Parliament. And all this in consequence of the state of Ireland, where six millions of people were determined to effect a change in the constitution of 1688, while two millions demanded that things should remain as they were. How was a minister who found himself in a situation of so much danger and difficulty to act? Without pretending ourselves to express an opinion, either in approval of the Duke's mode of reasoning or the reverse, we will endeavour to give, as clearly and succinctly as we can, an outline of the considerations which had weight with him at this juncture, and led him to the conclusion at which he ultimately arrived.

It was quite clear that to go on as former administrations had done, discussing the Catholic question from year to year, and throwing out in the Lords bills which had passed in the Commons, was impossible. The Clare election, with its results, had effected a complete change in the aspect of affairs. It was a new and most successful move on the part of the Catholic Association, and could not be met, except by a direct appeal to parliament for one decision or another. The govern-

ment which should make up its mind under such circumstances to maintain the statutes excluding Roman Catholics from power, must ask for new laws, seeing that the old had failed them. They must bring in a bill, requiring candidates for seats in Parliament to take at the hustings the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; otherwise they could not prevent Roman Catholics from contesting every vacant county and borough in the United Kingdom, and from becoming *ipso facto* members of parliament, should constituencies see fit to elect them. Practically speaking there might be small risk that either in England or Scotland this result would follow, at least to any extent. But what was to be expected in Ireland? That every constituency, with the exception, perhaps, of the university and city of Dublin, and of the counties and boroughs of the North, would, whenever the opportunity offered, return Roman Catholics; and that the members so returned, being prevented from taking their seats, three-fourths at least of the Irish people must remain permanently unrepresented in parliament. Was it probable, looking to the state of parties in the House of Commons, that such a measure, if proposed, could be carried? For many years back the majorities in favour of repeal had gone on increasing, session after session. Even the present parliament, elected as it had been under the strongest Protestant pressure upon record, had swerved from its faithfulness. The small majority which threw out Lord John Russell's bill in 1827, had been converted in 1828 into a minority; and among those who voted on that occasion with Mr. Peel, many gave him warning that hereafter they should consider themselves free to follow a different course.

But perhaps it might be possible to get a bill passed to disfranchise the Irish forty-shilling freeholders, a class of voters who, as they had been created for acknowledged purposes of corruption in the Irish parliament, would have nobody to stand up for them in high places, now that they refused to play their patron's game. This was quite as improbable an issue as the other. The disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders had indeed been talked of in former years: but if effected at all, it was to be in connection with a measure of Catholic Emancipation. To propose it now for the avowed purpose of rendering Catholic Emancipation impossible would be to ensure the rejection of the bill. That plan therefore fell at once to the ground. And there remained but two others.

The minister might ask parliament for power to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and to place all Ireland under military law. To ask for less would be ridiculous; because the act against unlawful assemblies had broken down, and on account of its helplessness was suffered to expire. Now would parliament grant such extensive powers to any government, merely that the government might be enabled to debar his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects a little longer from enjoying the same political privileges with Protestants? The issue was very doubtful,—perhaps it was not doubtful at all; parliament would never grant such powers. But assuming that the powers were given, what must follow? A general insurrection, to be put down after much bloodshed and suffering, and then a return to that state of sullen discontent which would render Ireland ten times more than she had ever been, a mill-stone round the neck of Great Britain. And by

and by, when military law ceased, and the same measure of personal liberty was granted to Irishmen which the natives of England and Scotland enjoyed, a renewal of agitation, only in a more hostile spirit, and the necessity of either reverting again and again to measures of coercion, or of yielding at last, what, upon every principle of humanity and common sense, ought not to have been thus far withheld. But the minister, if the existing parliament refused to give the powers which he asked, might dissolve, and go to the country with a strong Protestant cry; and this cry might serve his purpose in England and Scotland. Doubtless; but what would occur in Ireland? The return of Roman Catholic members in the proportion of four to one over Protestants, and the virtual disfranchisement thereby of four-fifths of the Irish people. Would Ireland submit quietly to any law carried against herself, in a House of Commons so constituted? Was it not much more probable, that a dissolution would only lead to the same results which had been shown to be inevitable in the event of the existing parliament acquiescing in the minister's views? And was there not, at all events, a chance that the electors even of England and Scotland, might refuse to abet a policy so pregnant with danger to themselves and to the commonwealth?

But why move at all? Mr. O'Connell had been elected by the priests and rabble of Clare to represent them in parliament. Let him retain this empty honour, or better still, let him be summoned by a call of the House to the bar; and on his refusal to take the oaths, issue a new writ, and go to a new election. In the first place, Mr. O'Connell could not be forced to attend to a call of the House, such call being obligatory only

on members chosen at a general election; and in the next, if he did attend, what then? As soon as the new writ was issued, he would take the field again as a candidate, and again be elected, and so the game would continue to be played, till a dissolution occurred, when all those consequences of which we have elsewhere spoken, would inevitably come to pass.

It is quite certain that both the Duke and Mr. Peel, weighed these various contingencies, with an anxious desire of discovering some way of escape out of the difficulty,—some good reason why they should continue their opposition to the admission of Roman Catholics into parliament. Their correspondence with the members of the Irish government, and with the Irish law officers of the crown, clearly proves this.* Every conceivable expedient was suggested — short of provoking the rebellion, which it was their earnest desire to avert — and failed. Not Mr. Fitzgerald only, but Lord Anglesey, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Gregory, Major Warburton, all indeed whom they consulted, both soldiers and civilians, agreed that Ireland was kept down only by the presence of the army; and even this restraint, should things long remain as they were, might fail to serve its purpose. We may smile when we read of doubts expressed as to the motives which, at such a juncture, carried Marshal Macdonald from Paris to Dublin. Marshal Macdonald, there is good reason now to believe, never entertained a thought of mixing himself up in Irish politics. And of the secret fabrication of pikes, and the midnight drillings which went on, we may

* See Mr. Peel's Narrative, edited by Lord Stanhope and Mr. Cardwell.

think as lightly as we have learned to do of the Chartist irruption into London in 1848. But taken in connection with well-known facts, such as the bold attitude assumed by the Roman Catholic clergy, and the entire abandonment of the Irish landlords by their tenants at the hustings, and that too, in a case where the landlord's candidate had, throughout his public life, been the consistent advocate of the repeal of the very laws against which the Irish people were banded,— taken in connection with such facts as these, even the rumour of French sympathy, and of secret and armed organisations, was not without its weight in turning the balance of opinion in thoughtful minds towards a policy of concession.

On the other hand, all the claims of party, all the ties of private friendship and public consistency, were against concession. The supporters of the present government, in both Houses of Parliament, did not conceal the fact, that they gave up their prejudices on many other points, because of the faith which they reposed in the Duke and Mr. Peel, as staunch supporters of the constitution of 1688. The great body of the people, both in England and Scotland, regarded the Pope as Antichrist, and looked upon the point in dispute rather as a religious than as a political question. The King's objections to a repeal of the obnoxious laws were as strong as ever. Could these difficulties be overcome?

Two courses presented themselves to the Duke at this juncture. He might go to the sovereign and explain, that he found himself unable to carry on the government, with a cabinet divided on so important a question, and with a growing party in favour of repeal in both houses. The King would in this case be obliged

to make his choice; either to form a government, if he could, united in its opposition to the Roman Catholic claims, or to call to his councils men who should agree to bring in a bill for the repeal of the disabling laws. But the experiment to form a cabinet united against the Roman Catholics had already been tried and failed: while a new cabinet united in favour of repeal, which must consist almost exclusively of the leaders of the Whig party, would certainly be defeated and overthrown on this or some other question in anticipation of this, by the Tories. Not only, therefore, would the hindrances to good government not be removed, but they would be rendered more serious than ever by the failure of the attempt made by an administration too weak to remove them.

This then was the first and most obvious of the two courses which presented themselves to the Duke: namely, to resign himself and dissolve the present administration, leaving it to his successor, Lord Grey or Lord Lansdowne, to settle the Catholic question as he best might. The Duke knew, however, that neither Lord Grey, nor Lansdowne, nor any other Whig statesman, could settle the Catholic question, even if he and Mr. Peel were to support it out of office. But being convinced that the time had come when it ought to be settled, he examined the second course that was open to him and embraced it. It was this: that postponing all other considerations to what he believed to be a great public duty, he should himself as prime minister endeavour to carry repeal, and to do so in such a manner as might as little as possible affect injuriously the established institutions of the country, and especially the Established Church.

Having arrived at this conclusion, the Duke set himself at once to consider the line of action which it would be proper to adopt. On more than one previous occasion, the heads of the Roman Catholic party, including prelates and other dignitaries of the church, had themselves proposed securities. They had offered to allow to the crown a veto on the nomination of their bishops. They had professed themselves willing that their clergy should be paid by the state. They were prepared for exclusion from certain high offices, and ready to give any pledge which might be required, that they would not use their influence to injure the Established Church in its rights and property. Mr. O'Connell, speaking for them, had even consented to the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders. So far, therefore, the Duke had a base on which to rest his operations. But there were grave constitutional objections to bringing the King of England into direct relations with the Pope; and a measure so strong as the unconditional disfranchisement of the Irish forty-shilling freeholders was pretty sure, when it came to the point, to be rejected in parliament. Moreover his Majesty's settled dislike to deviate on the Roman Catholic question from the policy of his father was well known; and the policy which the late Duke of York had with so much energy enunciated in the House of Lords, besides being supported by one at least of his royal brothers, was in great favour with the bulk of the English people out of doors. How were these difficulties to be overcome?

It was evident that till the King should be so far moved, as to induce him to examine dispassionately the whole condition of Ireland, no attempt to deal with the question of Roman Catholic Emancipation could be

made with any hope of success. The Duke resolved therefore to open that subject to his Majesty in the first instance, and so to approach it, that the feelings by which his Majesty was known to be swayed should as little as possible be outraged. This was the more necessary, as the King's health had become of late very infirm. Dropsy in an aggravated form, which had long threatened, seemed to be gaining ground upon him; and dropsy, as need scarcely be observed, not only enfeebles the body, but unfits the mind for exertion. Accordingly his Grace, after having prepared an elaborate memorandum, with the view of submitting it to his colleagues, sent it on the 2nd of August to the King, and accompanied it with a letter, in which his reasons for taking this step were set forth in detail. It would be drawing too much upon the patience of the reader, who has perused the general sketch just given of the state of Ireland at that time, were we to transcribe the Duke's memorandum at length. But of its contents some notice must be taken, in order to convey a tolerably accurate idea of the chain of thought which led the Duke to the conclusions at which he had now arrived.

The memorandum, after assigning the reasons which had induced the writer to compile it, proceeds to point out that the influence and the power of government in Ireland were no longer in the hands of its officers, but had been usurped by the demagogues of the Catholic Association, who acting through the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy, directed the country as they thought proper. Up to that moment it might be doubted whether anything had been done in violation of the law. Mr. O'Connell's election, though inconsistent with the law, was not a breach of it. But everything

had been done to manifest the influence and power of the demagogues of the Association, and of their agents the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church,— their contempt for the legislature, their enmity to the British government and its establishments, and their determination to overthrow the authority of that government in Ireland whenever an opportunity should offer.

For this purpose, and with these views, Ireland had been completely organised. This appeared in various recent events, but most particularly in the late election for the county of Clare. It was useless to enter into the details of that transaction; but it was certain that the whole of the lower orders of the population (with the exception of a few Protestants), moved in regular military order, those of each parish under the direction of their priests, to the election town; that they there remained under the same influence and direction till it came to the turn of those qualified to vote; that they bivouacked in an open space near the town, or were cantoned in the houses in the neighbourhood on various nights; that they paid for their lodgings; that no violence, disorder, or even insult was committed; and that they returned after the triumph of the successful election was over, in the same order as that in which they had come to Ennis.

His Grace then goes on to call attention to the results of the election, to the amount of subscriptions raised for carrying it on, to the rejoicings in the southern and western districts, and to the absence of such rejoicings in Dublin and the north. From these premises he draws the conclusion that Ireland is thoroughly organised; that the Roman Catholic clergy

are the instruments of this organisation; that its management is in the hands of the demagogues of the Association; and that the organisation of 1828 is so far superior to that of 1798, that the managers, by means of the Catholic rent, command considerable pecuniary resources which they have it in their power, by the use of the same influence over the people, to increase to a very large amount. It might fairly be assumed, then, that the demagogues of the Roman Catholic Association held in their hands, at that moment, the political power and the fate of Ireland. Upon them depended whether the people should rise in rebellion, or should remain quiet; to what degree they should obey the law and the legally constituted authorities of the country, and whether they should submit themselves to the influence which rank and property possess in every well-constituted locality.

Accordingly, we find the influence of these demagogues paralyzing the royal authority itself. The king cannot confer the honour of the peerage upon an Irish gentleman, a member of parliament for an Irish county, because the government cannot, in prudence, incur the risk of exposing the public peace to the dangers which were avoided in Clare only by the prudence or fears of the demagogues of the Roman Catholic Association. His Majesty cannot appoint a member for an Irish county to an office, and still less can he dissolve his parliament. The Lord-Lieutenant had been insulted in his court, by the appearance there of one of these leaders, decorated with the insignia of the pretended liberators, that is, of rebels; and the Roman Catholic Association had continued, up to that time, to meet, in contempt of the declared intention of parlia-

ment, if not contrary to the positive enactments of the law.

Pursuing this line of argument, his Grace points out, that every day in which these evils continued, brought law and authority more and more into contempt ; that there were no means of putting a stop to them, unless some act of open violence were committed; that the demagogues were too wily, prematurely to commit such acts; and that with them, therefore, rested the power either of putting off a rebellion indefinitely, or of beginning it on the morrow.

His next object is to show, how useless it would be to think of combating such evils in detail. If parliament refused to adopt half measures, such as disfranchising forty-shilling freeholders, the influence of the crown would be weak. If parliament assented to that proposal, the masses would still be under the influence of the priests, and probably an outbreak would be precipitated. He then touches upon the inevitable results of such an outbreak—a civil war, in which the King's reputation must suffer; which would not be approved by a majority in the House of Commons; and which, end as it might, must certainly be followed by concessions quite as extensive, probably more so, than any which could now be proposed. He, therefore, suggests the propriety of resorting to concession, as one of the means of pacifying Ireland; and ends thus:—

"It may be very doubtful whether the concession of Roman Catholic Emancipation, with any guards or securities, or in any form, would pacify the country, or save it from the civil contest hanging over it. But whatever the King and his ministers might think of the chances of pacification which Roman Catholic

Emancipation would afford, it had become the duty of all to look these difficulties in the face, and to lay the ground for getting the better of them. It would be necessary to conciliate parliament, if possible, and the public, to whatever measures might be prepared, in order that if we should be involved in this contest we might enter into it with the support of parliament and of the people of England."

The letter which inclosed the memorandum, of which we have here given the substance, expressed no more than the anxious desire of the writer, that his Majesty would carefully consider it. He had not shown it to any of his colleagues; and the object of it was to obtain his Majesty's permission to take into consideration the whole case, with a view to the adoption of some measure to be proposed to parliament for the pacification of Ireland.

What his Grace wished was, that his Majesty would be pleased to permit him to consider this question in communication with the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Peel; that he might be allowed to bring under his Majesty's review the result of such consideration; and that afterwards, with his Majesty's approbation, he should proceed to such ulterior measures as his Majesty might think proper, with a view to ascertain the sentiments of others before he should finally submit that result to his colleagues in the cabinet.

According to this mode of proceeding his Majesty would have the control over this subject in his own hands till the last moment; at the same time that he would have done his government and the country the justice to have considered it fairly.

There lies before us a memorandum in the Duke's

handwriting, dated March 30th, 1828, which was evidently drawn up for his own guidance, should circumstances impose upon him the necessity at any future time of vindicating the course which he took on that occasion. We do not feel at liberty to transcribe that document; but its argument clearly laid down, and ably sustained, runs thus.

Shortly after the 2nd of April, accounts were received in England of the speech made by Mr. Dawson at a meeting at Londonderry. This speech, proceeding from such a person, created the greatest suspicions of the intentions of the King's ministers. Brunswick clubs were established in Ireland. Lord Kenyon and the Duke of Newcastle published their letters in England; and everything indicated that the public mind was not in a state to receive and consider with calmness any proposition for the settlement of Ireland. What was passing did not fail to have its effect on the King's mind; and this circumstance, and his Majesty's indisposition, induced the Duke to postpone the communication to his Majesty of anything further upon the subject.

His Grace attended the King at Windsor early in October, when his Majesty expressed himself as strongly affected on account of the state of affairs. He was anxious to dissolve his parliament; to encourage the formation of Brunswick clubs throughout the country; and to take advantage of the feeling which occasioned the formation of these clubs, to go to a general election. The King's state of health at that time prevented his Grace from holding much conversation with his Majesty. He therefore wrote him a letter, of which No. 3 is the extract. At length, on the 16th of

November, finding that his Majesty was better in health, his Grace sent his Majesty the letter and paper, marked No. 4 and 5, to which he received the answer, marked No. 6.

The letter here alluded to, as marked No. 3, puts forth in detail the Duke's reasons why a dissolution of parliament, under the circumstances of the times, ought not to be thought of. It explains that the evils of which he had spoken in his first memorandum could not be remedied, that they would scarcely be temporarily alleviated, by the excitement throughout the country of a spirit of hostility in Protestants towards Roman Catholics; and by the encouragement thereby given to exact pledges from candidates against all further concessions to the latter body. He shows that the government, as then constituted, could not encourage the growth of such a spirit, and that it would be impossible for any minister to give encouragement to it, and yet carry on the affairs of government to the satisfaction of the nation at large. He then points out that the resistance to the law in Ireland was passive, not active; and that without some overt breach of the law, not even military force could overcome such resistance.

He next proceeds to observe, that he is suggesting no impossible hypothesis by assuming that the Roman Catholic tenantry of the country might refuse to pay tithes or rents. No doubt the clergy and the landlords had it in their power to appeal to the law; but how could the law be enforced? How could they distrain for rents or tithes upon millions of tenantry?

This measure, as it would probably be the first of resistance and rebellion in Ireland, so it would occasion

the ruin of all his Majesty's loyal subjects residing in that country, and of many in England. And it was necessary to observe that it would give the rebellion a vast revenue in money, of which his Majesty's loyal subjects would have been deprived. His Grace then proceeds to say, that expecting this measure of resistance and rebellion to be adopted, he was very averse to involve those who might be its victims in political discussions connected with the state of Ireland, which, after all, must be decided in parliament. He did not object to their associating together, for the protection of their own lives and properties; but looking to the state of society in Ireland, and to the opinions entertained respecting the causes of it, he was of opinion that they would do well to leave political questions to be settled in parliament.

It is worthy of remark, that this dread of associating out of parliament for political purposes constituted a sort of passion with the Duke. He would never listen to any proposal of the kind, no matter from whence proceeding, or for what object intended; and in principle he was right. Even during the heats and confusion of the reform agitation he refused to sanction the formation of constitutional societies; and of Brunswick clubs he entertained almost as great a horror as of the Catholic Association itself. What was to be done with society, thus rapidly breaking up into its elements? The law must clearly be vindicated; and, inasmuch as in its existing state it appeared to have lost all hold on the respect of those to whom it applied, it must be modified, so as to meet the altered state of things which had arisen.

CHAP. XII.

THE DUKE'S PLAN OF ROMAN CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.—HE COMMUNICATES WITH HIS COLLEAGUES, AND WITH THE HEADS OF THE CHURCH.—THE RESULTS OF THESE COMMUNICATIONS.

1828—29.

HAVING arrived at these conclusions, and in some measure prepared the King's mind to consider dispassionately whatever scheme of relief might ultimately be proposed to him, the Duke set himself to arrange his own thoughts on the subject, and threw them into the shape of an elaborate memorandum, which he submitted first to his Majesty, and afterwards to his colleagues, with a view to its receiving from them individually their best attention, before it should be taken up and discussed in the cabinet. He prefaced that memorandum with a letter to the King, in which the state of Ireland is described with a degree of painful accuracy which is quite appalling. It was becoming, he observed, day by day more intolerable. In the south, every evil which could afflict a country, short of actual rebellion, prevailed. Combinations had been entered into to resist the payment of rents and tithes to members of Brunswick clubs, under which title was included every member of the Church of England resident in the country. The Roman Catholics had bound themselves not to have any dealings, commercial or social, with members

of these clubs. A case was reported to the Secretary of State of a gentleman, a member of a Brunswick club, whose lands happened to be let to Roman Catholic tenants. They had all thrown up their farms. There were instances of Roman Catholic labourers refusing to work for their employers, because they were members of Brunswick clubs. The consequence of this was, that the agricultural property of these gentlemen lay exposed, at that critical period of the year, to the weather, and, of course, to ruin. It had been reported from various quarters that Protestants could not venture to move a hundred yards from their own houses; and the Duke was able, of his own knowledge, to assert, that respectable persons, such as retired officers of the army, and officers on half-pay, were quitting Ireland, because they looked upon it as a country not in a state of civilisation; and all these evils were of such a nature, that none of them could be remedied by the positive enactment of law.

On the other hand, nearly all the speakers of the Brunswick clubs in England, as well as in Ireland, not less than the public in general, looked for some arrangement of the Roman Catholic question to be proposed by government. Even Lord Winchelsea had written to say that he would agree to such an arrangement; while in Ireland many Protestants were prepared to go as far in the way of concession as the Roman Catholics themselves could desire.

Knowing all this, the writer was perfectly satisfied that no minister could advise his Majesty not to take into consideration the state of Ireland.

The questions which arose were therefore these:—Could that subject be taken into consideration? Could

any measures be proposed with the faintest prospect of success, from which a consideration of the Roman Catholic question should be excluded? And must not the concession to Roman Catholics of seats in parliament be among the measures proposed for the settlement of the Roman Catholic question?

Finally, his Grace implored the King to look dispassionately at these matters, and carefully to weigh the plan which he took the liberty of enclosing for his Majesty's consideration. For he submitted it with the firm conviction on his mind, that, if what was therein proposed could be carried, the Roman Catholic affairs of the empire would be placed upon a better footing than at any time since the Reformation. Indeed, the state would acquire strength from the arrangement, because it might be attended by any others which the preservation of the peace of the country seemed to render necessary.

Not satisfied with this strong appeal to the good sense and judgment of the sovereign, the Duke sought permission, before his Majesty should determine against taking his plan into consideration, to lay it before the heads of the church, particularly the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, Lincoln, Chester and Oxford. He could not pretend to foretell the consequences of the determination to do nothing, to his Majesty's government, to the peace of the country, or to the interests, particularly of his Majesty's loyal subjects in Ireland. But this fact he must submit: the King had still the matter in his own hands. If seats in parliament were conceded, his Majesty could attach to such concession any conditions or arrangements that his Majesty might think proper;

but no human being could answer for the consequences of delay.

The Duke's plan, drawn up and settled on the 7th of August, 1828, embraced eight separate points.

The first of these provided for the repeal of the 9th clause of the 33 Geo. III. c. 21 (Irish), which disables Roman Catholics from holding certain offices, exceptions being still made of a few offices distinctly specified. Roman Catholics were thereby rendered eligible to all other offices, on taking the oaths prescribed in the 13 & 14 Geo. III. c. 35; under the 7th clause of the 33 Geo. III. c. 21 (both Irish).

The second suggested the suspension, for one year, or for the current session of Parliament, in favour of all members who should take the oaths as prescribed in the Acts of 13 & 14, and 33 Geo. III (Irish), of that clause in the Act of Union, which requires members of the United Parliament to take the oaths of supremacy, and to make and subscribe the declaration against transubstantiation.

The third required that no person should be admitted to vote for a member of parliament, for any county, county of a city, or town in Ireland, on account of his being possessed of a freehold, unless he should have paid to the parish, barony, or county cess, or to all three, the sum of five pounds sterling per annum, and the person proposing to vote would by this arrangement be called upon to produce regular receipts for such payments, before his vote would be received.

The fourth asked a grant, subsequently fixed at 300,000*l.* a year, from parliament, to enable his Majesty to make such provision as he might think proper for the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland.

The fifth stipulated, that no person whatsoever was to exercise any ecclesiastical function in connexion with the Roman Catholic Church, in Great Britain or Ireland, who should be ordained, or if ordained already, should be for the first time employed in any chapel or parish, after the passing of this act, without a license from his Majesty, countersigned by the Secretary of State, or from the Lord-Lieutenant, countersigned by the Chief Secretary.

The sixth rendered it imperative on all the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics receiving any stipend from the crown, or license by his Majesty, to take the oaths of the 14 & 33 Geo. III. ; and further, an oath to be framed, declaring that they would not assume any title, pre-eminence, or authority, within his Majesty's dominions, nor presume to exercise any authority not conceded to them by the laws of the land.

The seventh declared that persons performing the ecclesiastical functions of the Roman Catholic Church without having obtained a license, should be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and be liable upon conviction for the first offence to be fined; for the second, to be fined and imprisoned; and for the third, to be sent out of his Majesty's dominions.

The eighth, and last, enacted, that no convent for males or females, or establishment of regular clergy of the Roman Catholic religion, or of Jesuits, should be formed in his Majesty's dominions without his license.

It is not to be supposed that the Duke arrived at these conclusions, far less that he reduced them to shape, without preliminary consultation with men better read than himself in the canon law, and in the customs of the universal church. So long indeed as points purely

political were before him, he was a tolerably safe guide to himself; or if his judgment seemed to be at fault, able advisers were near, in the Lord Chancellor and in other eminent constitutional authorities. But in matters directly or indirectly affecting the spiritual rights of the Church of Rome, and the conscientious scruples of its members, he was compelled to seek for information elsewhere, and he found it. And here, without undervaluing the assistance rendered to his Grace by others, we must be permitted to name one correspondent, to whom he made frequent references, and from whom he never failed to receive the clearest and most satisfactory answers. Dr. Phillpotts, then Dean of Chester, and rector of Great Stanhope, now the learned and venerable Bishop of Exeter, seems to have mastered the whole subject, complicated as it was. To every question proposed by the Duke, he replied, by referring to admitted precedents, now in the authoritative works of Romish divines, now in the acts by Concordat, or otherwise, of continental sovereigns; and the result was such an accumulation of evidence, as left his Grace no reason to distrust, in any respect, the course of legislation on which he proposed to enter. We do not feel at liberty to quote the bishop's letters, or even to refer to them; but sooner or later they must see the light,—and when this occurs it will be found that no man ever less deserved than he the obloquy which was heaped upon him at the time, or more earnestly or wisely strove to guard the Protestant Church of England from injury, while meting out a full measure of justice to his Roman Catholic fellow-subjects.

In submitting his plan to the sovereign and to the consideration of his colleagues, the Duke supported its

recommendations in a long and laboured argument; of which we cannot undertake to give more than the substance. He urged that Clause 1 would concede to his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects the capacity to fill every office in the state to which their wishes could reasonably point. From some they must doubtless be excluded; but the number of exceptions ought to be reduced within the narrowest possible compass, because every limitation of the sort operated as a restriction upon the prerogative of the crown. No honest Roman Catholic, for example, could desire to become the dispenser of the crown's ecclesiastical patronage in a Protestant country. Neither would Protestants submit to have their church benefices disposed of by Roman Catholic statesmen. Therefore the law must provide that a Roman Catholic should never become lord high chancellor of England, first lord of the treasury, secretary of state for the home department, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, lord lieutenant of Ireland, chancellor of any of the universities, head of a house, provost or fellow of a college, or master of a school of royal foundation.

With respect to Clause 2, his Grace left the question open, how far it might, or might not, be desirable to revise the oaths in the Irish acts of 1774 and 1793. He was doubtful, also, as to the expediency of suspending the clause in the Act of Union, as proposed in this paragraph, which might perhaps be better repealed entirely. But that was a matter which he thought could stand over till it was seen how the proposed arrangement was likely to be received by all whom it concerned. If Protestants took it well, and Roman Catholics did not object to it, then the clause in the Act of Union might be repealed. If both, or

either party protested against it, a policy of suspension could be adopted. In either case, however, Roman Catholics would be able to sit in parliament, after having taken the oaths prescribed in the acts of 1774 and 1793.

And here, again, it appeared to his Grace that a question might arise, whether it would not be proper to limit the number of Roman Catholics who should be eligible to seats in the house of parliament. His own opinion was, that such limitation would be injudicious; because, first, a grievance would arise, if at any time the number sitting did not reach the verge of the limit; and next, it would be difficult to establish a mode of enforcing the limitation, should the numbers at any time be exceeded. Nor was that all. The object of the proposed legislation was to break up or diminish the power of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, considered as a political party, by placing them on the same footing with Protestants; which would certainly not be the case so long as Protestants were admitted in unlimited, and Roman Catholics only in limited numbers, into parliament. Besides, the end itself could not be thus attained; for a distinction so invidious would throw every Roman Catholic into the ranks of radicalism; and wherever they could not send to the House of Commons a coreligionist, they would be pretty sure to send a radical reformer.

Speaking of Clause 3, his Grace observed, that its great object was to restore in Ireland the legitimate influence of property in returning members to parliament. Could this be best effected by creating, as he proposed to do, a new qualification; or was it more immediately attainable by simply disfranchising the whole

body of forty-shilling freeholders? His Grace was in favour of his own proposal, because he believed that, equally with disfranchisement, it would tend to restore to property its influence; and because, in spite of the recent defections of the forty-shilling freeholders from the landlords, he doubted whether it would be easy to obtain a bill of absolute disfranchisement. In either case, however, or by either means, he was bent on getting rid of a system which, false in itself, tended to perpetuate perjury and crime of every kind, and which lay at the root of that excessive subdivision of land which, more than almost anything else, was the cause of the over-population and wretchedness of Ireland.

Having disposed of these points, the Duke went on to discuss the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the scheme which he had devised for bringing the Roman Catholic clergy into connexion with the civil government. His manner of dealing with this great subject is eminently characteristic of the man. As a general who leads his troops to the attack of a fortified position, first drives in the enemy's pickets, and disposes of any outworks which lie in his way, so the Duke begins by settling what is to be done in regard to the marriage, christening, and burial fees, and Easter offerings, which the Irish priests were in the habit of exacting from their flocks. On the whole, he conceives that it would not be prudent to meddle with these things. Of right they belonged to the legal incumbent of the parish; who connived at their being given to the priest, because the priest did the work. It would not, therefore, be becoming in the legislature to say, that because the incumbent chose to waive his right his right should cease. Neither was it competent to

parliament to stand between the incumbent, and any use which he might think proper to make of these fees. On the whole, therefore, he arrived at the conclusion, that it would be best to avoid all legislation on the point, even though the consequence might be that the priest, receiving both his stipend and his fees, should in many instances become a richer man than the Protestant incumbent.

Of the probable objection, in an economical point of view, to the payment of the Roman Catholic clergy out of the Consolidated Fund, his Grace disposed by referring to the arrangements actually in force for paying the ministers of two sects of Protestant Dissenters in Ireland. Here was a precedent founded in considerations of policy; and if the policy were wise in one case, it could hardly be denied that it would be equally wise in the other. For nobody would venture to say of the Irish Presbyterians, that they were one whit less hostile to the Established Church than the Roman Catholics. As to religious scruples, into these he did not enter. He seems, indeed, at this stage in the affair, not to have contemplated the possibility of mixing up religious feeling with arrangements so entirely secular. He, therefore, passes on from Clause 4, in his projected measure, to Clauses 5, 6, and 7; all addressed to a subject of much greater delicacy in the handling than any which preceded them.

The case between the British empire and the popedom stood thus: The sovereign of Great Britain at his coronation, every member of either house of parliament on first taking his seat, every magistrate and other individual in authority, had sworn, that the pope neither has nor ought to have any authority, pre-eminence, or superiority in any cause ecclesiastical or

secular within this realm. The acts of parliament requiring these oaths affirm the same thing; yet within the realm there were some millions of persons who held opinions the reverse of those asserted by the law. Whether was it better to alter the laws of which the vast majority approved, in order to satisfy the scruples of the minority, and give them a status which they had not; or, preserving the old laws, to make such arrangements as should enable the minority to retain their religious opinions and to celebrate their religious rites, subject to the general control of the government under which they lived? It was not to be forgotten, that though fallen practically into disuse, the laws which prohibited the performance of mass in Ireland, and subjected to fine and imprisonment priests so officiating, were still on the statute-book. Whatever freedom of action the Irish Roman Catholic clergy exercised in that respect, they, therefore, exercised at their peril. For the power rested with the government, should circumstances ever compel them to make use of it, of carrying into effect laws which had never been repealed, and of the existence of which every priest was aware.

On former occasions, when schemes for Catholic emancipation were entertained, the safeguard proposed for the Established Church, on the one hand, and for the consciences of Romanists, on the other, had been the arrangement of a Concordat, between the crown and the pope; whereby the former should exercise a veto upon all appointments made by the latter to the episcopate. Such a Concordat could not, however, be entered into, without admitting that the pope possessed a power, which the coronation oath and the

oath of supremacy denied, and which was declared by various acts of the legislature to have no existence. But an admission of this sort could only be obtained by the repeal of laws which were intermingled with the very core of the English constitution; and the objections to this repeal were as obvious as they were weighty.

Again; the king of England could not, of his own authority, nominate to Roman Catholic bishoprics; first, because the act would be antagonistic to the relations in which the crown stands towards the Established Church of England and Ireland; and next, because such nomination would be resisted by the whole body of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects.

Nor was the force of these objections lessened by reference to the relations in which the court of Rome stood towards continental states, of which the sovereigns did not profess the Roman Catholic faith. In Prussia, for example, the king, though a Protestant, appoints to bishoprics as they fall vacant in the Roman Catholic portions of his dominions. But he does so in virtue of Concordats, entered into between the pope and his Majesty's Roman Catholic predecessors: in Silesia, according to an old arrangement between the pope and the sovereigns of the house of Austria; in the territories on the right bank of the Rhine, according to Concordats between the former sovereigns of these countries and the pope; in the territories on the left bank of the Rhine, according to a Concordat settled between the pope and Napoleon.

Again, in Holland, where till very lately no Concordat existed, neither bishop nor priest of the Romish Church could officiate except by license from the civil

magistrate; while in Sweden a vicar apostolic, and only one, received the royal license to discharge the functions of his office. In Russia alone, Catherine the Great, it appeared, had established by her own authority. a Roman Catholic archbishopric at Mohelow, and the archbishop appointed to the diocese ordained bishops and priests to act under him. But besides that, it might be doubted whether the Roman Catholics of the archdiocese of Mohelow were ever very orthodox, the pope it seems ultimately gave way, and by recognising confirmed the appointment. The king of England could not, however, for reasons already assigned, follow such a precedent.

It was by such a process of reasoning as this, that the Duke arrived at the conclusion, that the king of England could enter into no diplomatic relations with the pope; that a Concordat, which implies that the pope has something within the realm to concede, could never be concluded between him and a sovereign who, in his coronation oath, and by repeated acts of parliament, affirms, that no foreign prince, prelate, or potentate, hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, or authority within these realms. Such Concordats as had force in Prussia could never be entered into here; because, except in North America, the king of England had acquired no territory by conquest or cession from any Roman Catholic sovereign; and if concluded it would be impossible to carry them into effect. It would be equally useless to consider the arrangements which other Roman Catholic or Anti-Roman Catholic sovereigns might have made for accomplishing a similar purpose. They all rest upon the same assumption, that the pope has something in each country to concede; a

principle which cannot be admitted as long as the laws in England continue what they are.

The clear sequence from all this was, that till some or all of the acts of parliament which form the basis and establishment of the Protestant religion in this country are repealed, it will be impossible to assimilate the form of securities for the state in its relations with his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects to those which exist elsewhere. But it appeared to his Grace that a system of licenses from the crown to Roman Catholic priests would meet all the difficulties of the case. For such licenses, if made liable to be withdrawn at the pleasure of the crown, and supported by a law which should prohibit the performance of ecclesiastical functions without them, particularly if the law extended the prohibitions as well as the penalties on disobedience to priests whom the crown might deprive of their stipends,—would operate quite as effectually as a veto upon the nomination of bishops by the pope, or as the establishment of the principle of nomination itself by the crown.

It is worthy of attention, that the whole system proposed would be the creation of the English law, and would be carried into execution by virtue of legal enactments. Popery, argued his Grace, is of foreign growth, and it will be more consistent with the dignity of his Majesty's crown, that his Majesty should license the dependents of the see of Rome to exercise their ecclesiastical functions within his dominions, than that he should accept from the pope any pretended authority of nomination, or any check upon such nomination by the pope himself. We shall thus have established the greatest possible extension of toleration of the Roman

Catholic religion, with the best security for the state by the power of the state itself.

It might be contended, that by requiring a Roman Catholic clergyman to take out a license before he could perform his clerical functions, the principle of toleration would be violated. His Grace was not of that opinion. We tolerate the Roman Catholic religion to the utmost extent that it is possible; but the safety of the state requires that the government should have the means of exercising control over those who exercise so much influence and authority as the Roman Catholic clergy are known to do in all countries. And the proposed law establishes no more control than is exercised by every sovereign who rules over subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion.

But some would probably complain that the influence of the crown over the Roman Catholic priest under the operation of this system would be too strong; others, that the power of the crown over the priest would not be strong enough. These might safely be left, each party to reply to the other.

The purpose for which it was proposed to grant this power to the crown was, that the civil government might control the Roman Catholic priests, and prevent them from abusing the spiritual influence which they possess for purposes injurious to the good order of society and the interests of the state. Nobody denies the existence of the influence of the priests; few deny that it is mischievous. But who ever heard that its improper or mischievous influence could be proved in a court of justice?

The control over the Roman Catholic clergy in all

countries is kept in the hands of the crown. This control could not be entrusted in Ireland to the magistrates, whether acting singly or in petty sessions, or in quarter sessions, on account of the prejudice which is entertained against all their acts. The King alone then can exercise this power of license, and deprivation of license, with advantage. Nor must it be supposed that the clergy of the Church of England are entirely free from control. It is not necessary to contrast the relation in which that body stands towards the state, with that of the Roman Catholic clergy. But independently of the influence of the crown, of the hierarchy, of the landed aristocracy, and of the universities, always in operation upon the conduct of the clergy of the Church of England, the law has laid down rules in respect to their ordination, their submission to the doctrines and discipline of the Church, and to their conduct, which secure all the objects intended to be attained by the system of license made applicable to the Roman Catholic clergy.

The law likewise controls the conduct of the Dissenters from the Church of England. In Ireland, where the ministers of two dissenting persuasions are paid by government, the Lord-Lieutenant approves of the appointment of each clergyman of those persuasions before he enters upon the performance of his ecclesiastical duties.

From the consideration of these subjects the Duke turns to pass in review the laws prohibiting diplomatic and other communications with Rome, and sums up by giving it as his deliberate opinion, that they ought not to be meddled with. He doubts whether the Roman Catholics themselves would regard as a boon any relaxation of those laws, which should be accompanied

by increased watchfulness on the part of government; and he is satisfied that without some enactment of the sort, a Protestant parliament would never consent to change those laws. His views in regard to the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by the Romish clergy in Great Britain and Ireland are very decided. He points out that against the assumption of these titles the law is already stringent; and he recommends merely the addition of a few words at the end of the oath, to the effect, —that such titles of authority should not be assumed outside the doors of the church or chapel in which the bishop or priest taking the required oath might officiate. His clause against the increase of convents he merely repeats, suggesting, however, that measures should be adopted for regulating the terms on which individuals should be permitted to enter those already in existence.

Finally, the Duke is not of opinion that the Roman Catholic clergy in England should be paid by the state. They are few in number; their influence is inconsiderable; and their church, as compared with that in Ireland, is imperfect in its external constitution. With the appointment of vicars apostolic the King could have no concern; and if it were felt to be unnecessary to bring the clergy, by paying them, under restrictions, so it would be unfair to interfere with their proceedings generally. The Duke did not, when he wrote all this, foresee how, within a few years, the constitution of the Romish church in England was to be assimilated in every respect to that of the same church in Ireland.

It does not appear that the reception awarded by his Majesty to this scheme for settling the Roman Catholic difficulty, however gracious it might be, was very

cordial. The permission asked, to bring the subject under the notice of others, was not, indeed, withheld; but it was accompanied by a prohibition to mix up the King's name in any manner with the proceeding; and by an assurance that his Majesty continued to be, on principle, as much opposed as ever to concession in any shape or to any extent. Under these circumstances, the Duke could proceed in the matter only as with an arrangement purely hypothetical. How his plan, with its accompanying explanation, was handled by Sir Robert Peel—the posthumous volume, for which we are indebted to Earl Stanhope and Mr. Cardwell, explains. Sir Robert supported the Duke's doubts in regard to the policy of suspending any portion of the law as it stood; which, indeed, could not, according to his view, be done, unless the same principle were adopted in regard to that proceeding which, while the Test and Corporation Acts continued in force, had dictated the passing of an annual bill of indemnity. He was opposed, likewise, but more decidedly, to the substitution of a 5*l.* franchise for the 40*s.* freehold, on the ground that the criterion must be imperfect at the best, and that by good or bad management of the local expenditure votes could either be created or destroyed, as suited the convenience of those most deeply interested in electioneering movements. Strange to say, however, he expressed himself in favour of some scheme for limiting the number of Roman Catholic members, comparing it to the arrangements which had twice before been entered into, first at the union of Scotland with England, and next at the parliamentary union between Great Britain and Ireland. Yet this will appear to men of ordinary powers of mind to have been by far

the weakest part in the whole of the Duke's plan. For in addition to the objections which his Grace himself urges against it, it lay open, when brought side by side with the cases quoted in support of it, to one insuperable difficulty. The old settlements were made by parliaments which, as they represented distinct nationalities, were competent to give and take, in order to effect the amalgamation of which the nations represented by them were desirous. Whereas an act passed in 1828, or 1829, to declare that only a certain number of persons, professing a certain form of Christianity, should be eligible to seats in the Houses of Lords and Commons, would be an encroachment upon the rights of the crown, and the constitutional privileges of all the electors in all parts of the United Kingdom.

No doubt the dangers which Sir Robert Peel pointed out as incident to the general admissibility of Roman Catholics to parliament, were more than imaginary. It could scarcely be expected that Ireland, elated with her triumph, would fail to return to the House of Commons a body of representatives pledged to act together. And it was quite upon the cards that Lord Shrewsbury, or any other wealthy Roman Catholic peer or commoner in Great Britain, would go into the market and buy up as many boroughs as could then be purchased, with a view to recruit, by means of them, the Roman Catholic phalanx in the House of Commons. But as this evil could be regarded only as a contingent, indeed as a possible evil, while the act of limitation would outrage directly both the letter and the spirit of the constitution; the wonder is, that a mind so acute as that of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs should

have overlooked the greater in taking account of the lesser wrong.

Sir Robert Peel, then, approved of a scheme for fixing limits to the admission of Roman Catholic members to parliament. He disapproved of the proposal to require, as a qualification for voting in a freeholder, the payment of local rates to the amount of five pounds annually. But, equally with the Duke, he was bent on disfranchising, by some means or other, the forty-shilling freeholders. He assigns his reasons, which are these: that the life-tenant forty-shilling freeholder was the creation, so to speak, of yesterday. He had been called into existence to serve a particular purpose, and till the Catholic Association arose, he had served it. But now he was become insane on the subject of emancipation, the nature of which he not only did not understand, but which he believed to be an arrangement for the redistribution of property in Ireland, and the restoration of the forfeited estates to the descendants of those from whom they had been taken: and he had become the mere tool of the priests. "The small tenantry have deserted me to a man — even my own. I have polled all the gentry and the fifty-pound voters, but not a single forty-shilling freeholder." So wrote Mr. Fitzgerald at the close of the Clare election, and the words appeared, to the minister to whom they were addressed, to be written in fire. Hence, though the particular mode proposed for abating the nuisance appeared to Sir Robert Peel objectionable, he was, equally with the Duke, bent on abating the nuisance itself. And the manner of dealing with it, finally agreed upon between them, is shown in the separate bill, which he by and by introduced into parliament, and carried.

There seems to have been little difference of opinion between Sir Robert Peel and the Duke, in regard to the good policy of bringing the Irish priests, by some arrangement or other, under the control of the civil power. But Sir Robert, more prone than his illustrious colleague to foresee, perhaps to imagine difficulties, expressed himself apprehensive of determined opposition to the proposal of paying the priests. His grounds of fear were threefold. First, he apprehended that by taking into its pay the clergy of the Roman Catholic church, the government would be charged with seeking to set up two religious establishments. But this, which he brought forward as a constitutional difficulty, was surely no difficulty at all. The mere payment by the government of the clergy of any particular church, does not elevate that church into the rank of an establishment; otherwise, in France, where the clergy of many denominations are so paid, there must be many establishments. And in Ireland, the government already paid two dissenting bodies, neither of which ever set up a claim to be treated as an establishment. Indeed the difference between the established and other churches in Ireland, and in England, is this; that while the latter are open to receive pay from the government, the former neither claim, nor can well receive such pay; government doing for its clergy exactly what it does for other corporate or private proprietors, by insuring to them the continued enjoyment of property, which had been made over to their predecessors, ages ago, sometimes by sovereigns, sometimes by private persons. The United Church of England and Ireland is, indeed, a state church, because all its members acknowledge the king's supremacy;

and its bishops, sitting in the House of Lords, constitute the third estate,—the lords spiritual,—which is referred to as passing or advising every act of parliament. But the state of England does not pay the church any more than it pays the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, or the several colleges connected with them. On the other hand, a bill for the payment of the Roman Catholic or any other clergy out of the consolidated fund, must affect the clergy of the Church of England, as it affects all tax-paying members of the community. They will be called upon to contribute their share towards the general amount, and they will do it.

But apart from this, there were other objections to the arrangement. Would the Roman Catholic priests consent to receive payment from the government on such terms? And if they did, would the Protestant people of England be willing to pay for the performance of a species of worship which they regarded as idolatry?

There was reason to expect that opposition to the receipt of state pay, if it came at all, would not come from the priests. On more than one previous occasion, the representatives of that body had expressed themselves willing to receive government pay. And though the necessity of receiving also licenses from the crown might now offend the more ardent among them, it was probable that, putting the substantial gain against the unsubstantial loss, the arrrangement would not be generally refused. But if it were, what then? Only pass the bill, and having law on its side, the government would find little difficulty in compelling the priests to receive licenses; more especially since it would be accompanied by a boon to the importance of which the curates would not be insensible. But would

the bill be passed? Would the Protestant spirit of the nation allow it to pass?

Here lay the great stumbling-block of all; and in the hope of removing it, the Duke and Mr. Peel entered into communication with the leading prelates of the Church of England. Lloyd, Bishop of Oxford, seems to have been Peel's chief confident. Besides Dr. Phillpotts, the Duke corresponded, and held personal conferences with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, and Chester. It would little interest the general reader to be told into what channels these discussions fell, and by what arguments each of the contending parties supported his own opinions. Suffice it to state that the Duke found the prelates pliant, where he might have expected them to be obdurate; and obdurate on the very points which he held to be most conducive to the well-being of the Church and of the realm. The consequence was, that all the most valuable arrangements in his proposed bill, the clauses which provided for the paying and licensing of priests, and such like, were struck out; and that nothing was left in the form of security for the rights of the Church except an oath, which, though taken in the letter, has never been in substance observed; and which is liable at any moment, when the humour of parliament shall so run, to be abolished altogether.

CHAP. XIII.

MR. DAWSON'S SPEECH.—ITS EFFECT ON THE PUBLIC MIND.—THE DUKE'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH DR. CURTIS.—LORD ANGLESEY RECALLED.—DISCUSSIONS WITH THE KING.—THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIEF BILL.—THE DUEL WITH LORD WINCHELSEA.

1829.

All this while the condition of Ireland continued to be lamentable in the extreme. Agitation, indeed, seems to have reached the utmost extent of violence which it could attain, when that incident befell of which the Duke, in a memorandum elsewhere referred to, made mention. Mr. George Robert Dawson, one of the Lords of the Treasury, and still more a man of mark in consequence of his connexion by marriage with Sir Robert Peel, made a speech at a public dinner in Derry, which fell with ominous sound on the ears of all who listened to it, and was soon taken up and quoted at every public meeting throughout the United Kingdom. He made allusions in it to the hopelessness of endeavouring to govern Ireland while parties stood so far apart; and hinted at the wisdom, not less than the duty, of striving to meet on common ground, after mutual concessions. Instantly the Orangemen took fire. Their motto was "No surrender!" for if the chiefs in whom they had heretofore trusted were about to abandon them, they would stand the more firmly, shoulder to shoulder, and put down popery, or perish in the

attempt. The Catholic Association, on the other hand, accepting the speech as a feeler, became more arrogant and threatening than before. They would not concede one iota. Mr. O'Connell, who in 1825 had himself proposed the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders, now denounced this scheme as treason against the people. The honest voter, however poor, had the same right to his political privileges as the king had to his crown, and if any attempt were made to deprive him of these privileges, Mr. O'Connell would be the first to draw the sword, and to die, if necessary, on the scaffold or in the field.

Whether Mr. Dawson took his own line on the present occasion, or acted on the suggestion of others, was a doubtful point at the time, and we are not now in a position to settle it. But his proceeding was promptly disavowed by the cabinet, Mr. Dawson himself being deprived at the same time of his office. Meanwhile, Lord Anglesey wrote continually to say that repeal must be conceded; that the times were peculiarly favourable for concession, because the Roman Catholic bishops had become jealous of Mr. O'Connell and the Association, and would therefore accept any terms which the government might propose. And, finally, that though as yet the country was quiet, he would not be answerable for the consequences, if, after the meeting of parliament, government should do nothing; for, as he more than hinted, the soldiers were tampered with, and could not in several regiments be depended upon. We believe now, as the Duke believed at the moment, that so far as the troops were concerned, Lord Anglesey was deceiving himself or was deceived by others. But his Grace believed, also, that affairs were in a very unsatisfactory

state, and that it would be impossible to go on much longer without applying a remedy to existing evils. Mr. Leslie Forster, also, though an ultra-protestant and Orangeman, conjured the government to do something. He spoke of the Catholic Association and the Brunswick clubs as of hostile armies facing one another. He entertained no doubt that the latter, if let loose, would pacify Ireland in their own way; but he deprecated so frightful an issue, and therefore recommended that to every post under the crown not invested with political power, Roman Catholics should be rendered eligible. But this was a course which for obvious reasons the government found it impossible to adopt. To throw open to Roman Catholics the judicial bench, sheriffships, magistracies, and such like, yet to keep the doors of parliament closed against them, would only be to render their condition more anomalous than before; it would tend to prolong agitation, not to allay it; while it placed the agitators upon vantage ground, whence their future approaches could be made with increased facility and vigour.

It was at this anxious moment that the Duke of Clarence, under circumstances of a somewhat delicate nature, ceased to be Lord High Admiral of England; and that Lord Melville, removing from the Board of Control, took his place as First Lord of the Admiralty. He was succeeded in Cannon Row by Lord Ellenborough; but the office of Privy Seal, which thereby became vacant, the Duke did not immediately fill up. The fact is, that his Grace was a good deal perplexed, and rendered anxious by the indecision of Mr. Peel. Though convinced so long ago as 1827 that the battle of Anti-Catholicism could not be maintained for ever,—though

entering freely into the Duke's views, and sending through his Grace to the King an able paper in support of these views, Mr. Peel was naturally desirous to escape the painful and, to him, humiliating task of proposing a measure which, both in and out of office, he had throughout his public life consistently opposed. He again and again expressed his anxiety to resign, not with a view to resist emancipation, but to plead for it as an independent member of parliament, in which capacity he believed he would be able to promote the Duke's views far more effectually than by continuing in the administration. The Duke, on the other hand, was satisfied that Mr. Peel's resignation would render the passing of an emancipation act impossible for him; and if impossible for him, still more so, admitting that there could be degrees of impossibility, for any other statesman. He explained his reasons for this belief very fully to his colleague, yet left him free to decide upon his own course of action. "I propose to keep the Privy Seal vacant," he wrote, "because I am under the necessity of looking forward to future misfortunes. I consider you not pledged to anything; but I cannot but look forward to the not-impossible case of your finding yourself obliged to leave us to ourselves. In this case I must have the command of all the means possible to carry on the King's service, and I would keep other offices vacant, if I could."

We have alluded to the excitement, which was caused among the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Ireland by Mr. Dawson's speech at Derry. At first it appeared as if the long-expected collision was about to take place, for the Catholic Association assumed at once a threatening attitude, and the Brunswick clubs met them

with characteristic alacrity. Some blood indeed was shed, but either because they shrank from an appeal to arms, or because they had received secret information respecting the disposition of the government in their favour, the heads of the Association met in Dublin, and issued an order not to break the peace. It was promptly obeyed. No more meetings were held; no more inflammatory harangues delivered; and then, and not till then, came out a proclamation from the Lord-Lieutenant, denouncing as illegal proceedings which a power superior to his had already suppressed. All this at once irritated and confounded the Protestant party in both kingdoms. They were unable to comprehend what the objects of the government could be in first tolerating agitation so long as it went forward, and then declaring it to be illegal as soon as it had subsided of its own accord. Yet hoping, and perhaps believing, that the government wavered only because it stood in need of increased moral support, they resolved to give such support, and to give it effectually. The men of Kent set the example. Pennenden Heath, near Maidstone, became the scene of a monster meeting, at which the Earl of Winchelsea and Sir Edward Knatchbull, one of the county members, took a leading part; and from which there went forth, not only a petition against the admission of Roman Catholics to power, but an assurance that the sovereign would be supported in his endeavours to restore tranquillity in Ireland, to the utmost extent of their means, by his loyal Protestant subjects. This was on the 24th of October; and the example so set, was promptly and vigorously followed in other places. Indeed, the English Roman Catholics themselves began to exhibit symptoms of

alienation from their Irish co-religionists. They disapproved of the violent language of Mr. O'Connell and his fellow-agitators; they were prepared to give the securities which Mr. O'Connell and the Association refused; in a word, they not only believed the course which the Association was following to be disloyal, but they were persuaded that its effect would be to throw insurmountable obstacles in the way of a satisfactory settlement of the Catholic question.

Such was the general aspect of affairs, when the Duke of Wellington received a letter from Dr. Curtis, the titular primate of Ireland, setting forth the miserable condition of the country, and pointing out that a prolonged adherence to a policy of indecision must lead to very serious consequences. Dr. Curtis wrote with the greater freedom, that he and his illustrious correspondent had been acquainted many years. When the British army was in Spain, Dr. Curtis was head of one of the colleges in Salamanca, and found means, through his position and from the influence which it gave him, to supply the British general with a great deal of useful information. His services at that time were not forgotten, either by the Duke or by the English government. Interest was made for him at Rome, and the pope, grateful for the part which England had taken in re-instating him in his sovereignty, sent Dr. Curtis to Ireland as Roman Catholic primate. Under such circumstances the doctor's letter was received in the same spirit of candour with which it appeared to have been written; and in the course of a day or two the Duke addressed to him the following reply:—

"London, December 11, 1828.

"My dear Sir,—I have received your letter of the 4th, and I assure you that you do me justice in believing that I am sincerely anxious to witness the settlement of the Roman Catholic question, which, by benefiting the state, would confer a benefit on every individual belonging to it. But I confess that I see no prospect of such settlement. Party has been mixed up with the consideration of the question to such a degree, and such violence pervades every discussion of it, that it is impossible to expect to prevail upon men to consider it dispassionately. If we could bury it in oblivion for a short time, and employ that time diligently in the consideration of its difficulties on all sides (for they are very great), I should not despair of seeing a satisfactory remedy."

Though the letter was marked "private and confidential," the Duke could scarcely expect that his correspondent would keep the contents of it entirely to himself. On the contrary, he must have anticipated that Dr. Curtis would make them known among his friends; and if his Grace ventured to hope that men of influence might thereby be induced to exert themselves in the cause of order and tranquillity, who will blame him for so writing? But he never imagined for a moment that an old friend would use as an instrument of offence what had been put into his hands in a spirit of conciliation. Such, however, was the course which Dr. Curtis thought fit to pursue. He sent the Duke's letter to Mr. O'Connell. It was read, and publicly commented upon, amid vociferous cheering, at a meet-

ing of the Association; and Dr. Curtis was commissioned to make the Duke aware, that agitation not only would not cease, but that it would grow day by day more bitter, till a full and unconditional measure of emancipation was granted to his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects.

Not satisfied with this, Dr. Curtis transmitted a copy of the Duke's letter to Lord Anglesey; and received, by return of post, an answer as unwise in its object as it was ill-advised in its expressions. Like the Duke, Lord Anglesey had marked his communication "private and confidential." But in an evil hour, when smarting under a rebuke which for other reasons had fallen upon him, he suggested that his letter might be made public; and the Association, too happy to damage the government, printed it in the Dublin newspapers. This was on the 1st of January, 1829, the very day after Lord Anglesey had been warned by the Duke of Wellington that he might expect shortly to be recalled. It was impossible to overlook so flagrant a breach of official etiquette, and the recall, which the Duke had threatened on the 31st of December, instantly took place.

In justice to Lord Anglesey, we are bound to add, that when accounting to the House of Lords for this act of indiscretion, he ascribed it to a strong desire on his part to soothe the excited feelings of the Irish people. For a rumour of his dismissal had, it appeared, got abroad; and it was inferred that the Duke of Wellington, being determined to concede nothing, was equally determined not to leave in Ireland a Lord-Lieutenant whose views on the Catholic question were different from his own.

So passed day after day, and week after week. The Duke had borne the mortification of seeing his measure

shorn of its best features. He had laboured to bring the King to a sense of the real state of the question, and had only succeeded in part. He was now doomed to suffer no slight measure of anxiety in his communications with Mr. Peel. That gentleman, on the 12th of January, transmitted to him a paper, which took exactly the same view of the condition of Ireland as his Grace had already taken, with a request that he would show it to the King. He did show it; and saw, without surprise that his Majesty, though moved, was not persuaded by it. But that which distressed him most was a repetition of the desire, which on more than one occasion had been expressed by Mr. Peel, that the Duke would consent to his retirement, for a time at least, from the cabinet. The following letter will show both how he received this application, and what his views of the future were, so late as the period when it was written:—

"London, January 17, 1829.

"My dear Peel,—I entirely concur in the sentiments and opinions contained in the paper on the existing state of questions respecting Ireland, which, by your desire, I have given to the King; and I am equally of opinion with you that the only chance we have of getting the better of all the evils of the position in which the country is placed, is, that we should consider in cabinet the whole situation of Ireland, and propose to parliament the measures which may be the result of that consideration. You have been informed of what has passed between the King and me, and certain of the bishops and me, upon this subject, and you must see the difficulties with which we shall be surrounded in taking this course.

"I tell you fairly, that I do not see the smallest chance of getting the better of these difficulties if you should not continue in office. Even if I should be able to obtain the King's consent to enter upon the course which it will probably be found the wisest to adopt, which it is almost certain I shall not, if I should not have your assistance in office, the difficulties in parliament will be augmented ten-fold in consequence of your secession, while the means of getting the better of them will be diminished in the same proportion.

"I entreat you then to consider the subject, and to give us and the country the benefit of your advice and assistance in this most difficult and important crisis."

It would be hard to condemn Sir Robert Peel, because at such a crisis he exhibited less firmness of purpose than the great man with whom he was associated. The measure which he had assisted, if not to frame at all events to criticise, had been cut down by unskilful hands, till it seemed to him to have lost its proportions. He still believed that, mutilated as it was, it would suffice to place things in a position of less entanglement than then prevailed: but the extent of positive good to be expected from it was now doubtful, and his own share in accomplishing that good must be small. And this small amount of self-approval he was invited to purchase by the loss of all the ties of political, and perhaps of social friendship, which had surrounded him through life. Instead, therefore, of blaming him for repeating his desire to withdraw from the administration, which he should still support as a private member of parliament, he seems to deserve our praise for the self-denial which he exercised, and the readiness

with which at last he consented to stand by the Duke, and share with him the perils of the coming struggle. Be this, however, as it may, the negotiation went on. The King yielded, or appeared to yield, a reluctant assent to the wishes of his ministers: and so, when parliament met, which it did on the 4th of February, the speech from the throne was found to contain the following among other sentences:—"His Majesty laments that in that part of the United Kingdom (Ireland), an association still exists which is dangerous to the public peace, and inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution; which keeps alive discord and ill-will among his Majesty's subjects, and which must, if permitted to continue, effectually obstruct every effort permanently to improve the condition of Ireland. His Majesty confidently relies on the wisdom and on the support of his parliament; and he feels assured, that you will commit to him such powers as may enable his Majesty to maintain his just authority. His Majesty recommends that when this essential object shall have been accomplished, you should take into your deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that you should review the laws which impose disabilities on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects. You will consider whether the removal of these disabilities can be effected consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in church and state, with the maintenance of the reformed religion established by law, and of the rights and privileges of the bishops and of the clergy of this nation, and of the churches committed to their charge."

It is impossible to describe the effect produced, both upon parliament and upon the country at large, by the

latter of these clauses in the King's speech. Though there had certainly got abroad a sort of indistinct suspicion that a change of policy towards Ireland was contemplated, so frank an avowal of the purpose of the government to abandon the ground on which it previously stood, took all parties by surprise. The Tories, believing that their leaders had betrayed them, gave vent to their indignation in the most unmeasured terms. The Whigs, rejoicing in the near prospect of office which thus suddenly opened upon them, cheered the government forward, half in triumph, half in mockery. The King was miserable ; but the ministers held their course. On the 17th of February Mr. Peel brought in his bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association, which met with no opposition in either house. On the 20th he resigned his seat for the University of Oxford ; and being defeated by Sir Robert Inglis, after an attempt on the part of his friends to reinstate him, he was returned, not without a struggle, for Westbury. On the 3rd of March he gave notice, that he would draw the attention of the House on the 8th to that clause in his Majesty's speech which related to the Roman Catholic disabilities. Louder and louder the cry of dissatisfaction arose ; and whether moved by that, or acting on the suggestions of his own mind, the King sent the same evening to desire that the Duke, the Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Peel, should wait upon him next day. It was a very remarkable interview, but it was the only one which took place between his Majesty and his ministers, till after the Emancipation Act became law. And it is the more necessary to note this : because stories were circulated at the time, on what appeared to be good authority, of repeated conferences, and extreme harsh-

ness and arrogance by the Prime Minister. For these there was not a shadow of foundation in truth. The Duke saw the King more than once, while yet the expediency of adopting a particular line of policy was under consideration. His Majesty and he discussed it together, in all its bearings, and his Majesty never concealed the reluctance with which he consented to follow the advice of his ministers. But after the measure was arranged, the Duke never saw the King, except on the morning of the 4th of March, till the bill had passed through both houses. All the stories told, therefore, of tears on the one side, and threats and rudeness on the other, were the mere inventions of malice or disappointed ambition.

Mr. Peel, in the posthumous vindication of his own good name, has given a very correct account, as far as it goes, of all that passed on the occasion to which we now allude. The King received his three ministers, when they presented themselves at the palace, kindly but gravely. He looked anxious and embarrassed while he requested them to make him acquainted with the details of their bill. It was explained to him that the bill would relieve Roman Catholics from the necessity of making a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation; while it so far modified, in their case, the oath of supremacy, as to omit all notice of the king's authority in things spiritual. "What!" exclaimed the King, "do you mean to alter the ancient law of supremacy?" It was to no purpose that his Majesty was shown that the proposed alteration would apply only to one class of his subjects; that Protestants of every denomination would still continue to swear as their fathers had done before them; and that only

Roman Catholics would be excused from asserting on oath what in their consciences they were unable to believe. The King could not see this matter in the same light with his ministers. He appealed to his own coronation oath, which now for the first time he perceived to be directly at variance with the course which they wished him to follow; and assured them, at the same time, that he would rather abandon the throne than incur the guilt of perjury. What could the Duke or his colleagues say? The King was condescending in the extreme. He seemed deeply grieved at the dilemma to which they had been brought. He acknowledged that possibly he had gone too far on former occasions; though he had acted entirely through misapprehension. But now he trusted they would see with him, that it had become a point of conscience, and that there was no alternative left him except to withdraw his assent. In the most respectful manner they acquiesced in his Majesty's determination, allowing without a murmur that he had a perfect right to act as he proposed. But when he went on to ask further what they intended to do, the Duke's answer was explicit: they must retire from his Majesty's service, and explain to parliament, that unexpected obstacles had arisen to the accomplishment of the policy which they were engaged to pursue. To this Mr. Peel added, that as the bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association had been carried on the understanding that other and more comprehensive measures would follow, it would be necessary to make parliament generally aware of the causes which operated to prevent the bringing forward of those measures.

The King heard all this to an end without attempting to interrupt or to argue with his ministers. He ad-

mitted, on the contrary, that it was impossible for them to take any other course, and then bade them farewell, kissing each of them separately on both cheeks. They set off from Windsor immediately, and arriving at Lord Bathurst's, where their colleagues were waiting dinner for them, they made a full report of all that had occurred, and announced that the government was at an end.

The party broke up, believing themselves to be out of office; but early next morning, before any decisive steps had been taken, a special messenger arrived at Apsley House, with a letter from the King. It was guardedly expressed, for it went no further than to state, that his Majesty had found greater difficulties than he expected in forming a new cabinet, and was therefore desirous that the present administration should go on. The moment was a critical one, and the position of the government delicate, and in some sense insecure. No doubt his Majesty's letter might be read as implying an abandonment of the objections which he had taken to the policy of his ministers over night; but it was certainly capable of a different interpretation. It appeared therefore to the Duke, that before taking any further steps it would be necessary to come to a clear understanding with the King, as to his Majesty's real intentions; and Mr. Peel concurring in this opinion, his Grace was requested to write to the King upon the subject. He did so with all the candour and loyalty which were natural to him; and the result was an unequivocal declaration from the sovereign, that he would accept the measures of his ministers as his own, and give them every support in carrying them into effect. Accordingly, on the 5th of March, Mr. Peel brought into parliament

the bill of which he had given notice on the 3rd, delivering at the same time a speech to which the House listened with profound attention. But at its close a storm burst forth, which for violence of invective on the one side, and triumphant self-gratulation on the other, has seldom been equalled.

Nor was the feeling which produced this outbreak confined within the walls of parliament. The Duke and his colleagues fell at once from the pinnacle of popularity on which they had heretofore stood. Every Protestant newspaper in the three kingdoms covered them with abuse; every Protestant speaker in town-hall or tavern vilified them; and the very pulpits were in many instances converted into tribunes, from which to denounce them and their treason. But worse remains to be told. On the 17th of March, there appeared in the "Standard" newspaper, a letter bearing the signature of the Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham, in which that nobleman gave his reasons for ceasing to be a supporter of King's College, London, in the following terms:—

"I was one of those who at first thought the proposed plan [of building and endowing this college] might be practicable, and prove an antidote to the principles of the London University. I was not, however, very sanguine in my expectations, seeing many difficulties likely to arise in the execution of the suggested arrangement; and I confess that I felt rather doubtful as to the sincerity of the motives which had actuated some of the prime movers in this undertaking, when I considered that the noble Duke at the head of his Majesty's government had been induced, on that occasion, to assume a new character, and to step forward as

the public advocate of religion and morality. Late political events have convinced me that the whole transaction was intended as a blind to the Protestant and High Church party; that the noble Duke, who had for some time previous to that period determined upon breaking in upon the constitution of 1668, might the more effectively, under the cloak of outward show of zeal for the Protestant religion, carry on his insidious designs for the infringement of our liberties, and the introduction of popery into every department of the state."

Such an unwarrantable personal attack, coming from such a quarter, could not be passed over without notice. So, at least, the Duke felt and believed; for without consulting any one, he wrote on the following morning a short note to the Earl of Winchelsea, in which he requested to be informed whether his lordship were the author of the letter which his Grace had read in the "Standard" of the previous evening. He received, in due time, a reply, to the effect that Lord Winchelsea had written to the "Standard" newspaper, because he considered it his duty, in ceasing to support the institution of King's College, publicly to give his reasons for taking that step. The Duke's rejoinder, which followed immediately, deserves to be be given at length.

"London, March 19, 1829.

"My Lord, — I have the honour of receiving your lordship's letter of the 18th instant. Your lordship is certainly the best judge of the mode to be adopted of withdrawing your name from the list of subscribers to the King's College. In doing so, however, it does not

seem necessary to impute to me, in no measured terms, disgraceful and criminal motives for my conduct in the part which I took in the establishment of the college. No man has a right, whether in public or in private, in speech, or in writing, or in print, to insult another by attributing to him motives for his conduct, public or private, which disgrace or criminate him. If a gentleman commits such an act indiscreetly in the heat of debate, or in a moment of party violence, he is always ready to make reparation to him whom he may have thus injured. I am convinced that your lordship will, upon reflection, be anxious to relieve yourself from the pain of having thus insulted a man who never injured or offended you."

Of this letter Sir Henry Hardinge was the bearer, and Lord Winchelsea, after perusing it, referred him to the Earl of Falmouth. Lord Falmouth and Sir Henry met, and after some further discussion, into the details of which it is not worth while to enter, the time and place for a hostile meeting were settled. We happen to have before us a manuscript narrative of the circumstances attending this meeting, drawn up immediately after the event by Dr. Hume, the Duke of Wellington's friend and physician; and as everything which is calculated to bring out the specialities of the Duke's character seems to us to be important, we make no apology for transferring to our pages the following extract from it:—

"In consequence of a note which I received last night from Sir Henry Hardinge, requesting my attendance upon him at an early hour this morning, I repaired to his house in Whitehall-place at a quarter

before seven o'clock, when I found that he was engaged as second in a duel, and desired that I should accompany him to the field. Sir Henry did not inform me who the parties were, but he mentioned that they were persons of rank and consequence, and begged me particularly to keep near him, that I might witness everything that took place, and be able to testify how anxious he had been to prevent this meeting, and what his efforts still were to avoid bloodshed. He then told me he was obliged to mount his horse in order to find his friend, and requested me to step into his carriage, which was waiting in readiness, and would convey me to the place where my attendance was required.

"I went immediately into the carriage, which drove through the Green Park, by Pimlico, along the King's Road Chelsea, over Battersea Bridge; and stopped about half a mile on the other side of the river, at a point where the two roads cross each other, at the foot of the hill. Here I alighted, and was walking about to see if any one would make his appearance, when, to my astonishment, I perceived Sir Henry Hardinge and the Duke of Wellington riding towards me. The Duke rode suddenly up, saying in a laughing manner, 'Well, I dare say you little expected it was I who wanted you to be here.' I was overwhelmed with amazement, and so greatly agitated I could scarcely answer him; but I put on as steady a countenance as I was able, and replied, 'Indeed, my lord, you certainly are the last person in the world I should have expected here.' He said, 'Oh, perhaps so; but it was impossible to avoid it; and you will see by and by that I had no alternative, and could not have acted otherwise than I have done.' Sir Henry Hardinge, who was a little

behind the Duke, then came up; and after a few words of common conversation, they rode to the top of the hill, going to the right and to the left, as if looking out for their opponents. They returned in a short time to the carriage, near which I was walking; and requesting me to take out a case of pistols I had brought with me, and to follow them, they turned down the cross road to the left, which runs parallel to the right bank of the river, looking towards London. I took the pistols out of the case, carrying them in my hand, with my great coat thrown over my arm to conceal them, and proceeded along the road till it opens, after you pass a small farmhouse, into an extensive plain, called, I believe, Battersea Fields. Having left directions with Sir Henry's coachman for the other parties to follow when they should arrive, the Duke and Sir Henry again rode some little distance up the height, and seemed looking out for those they expected; and having laid the pistols in a field behind some broken hedges, I continued walking quietly along the path, to avoid attracting observation.

"I had not been long in this situation when I perceived two gentlemen issue from the narrow road, whom I immediately recognised as my Lord Falmouth and my Lord Winchelsea. Sir Henry Hardinge and the Duke turned their horses at the same instant, and came towards them. Sir Henry got off his horse and saluted Lord Falmouth and his friend; but the Duke kept at a little distance, although he had dismounted from his horse. Recollecting Sir Henry's request, I joined him with the two lords, and walked along with them.

"Lord Falmouth, as he turned through the gate into

the field where I had laid the pistols on the left of the bank towards the river, said he hoped he had not kept Sir Henry waiting, but that his coachman had, by mistake, driven them to Putney instead of Battersea Bridge. Sir Henry said, 'Oh no, it is no matter; pray let us proceed.' Lord Falmouth then begged to know whether he had received and read a certain paper he had sent or left for him; to which Sir Henry answered, he had got the paper, but had not read it; and made some remark on the little necessity, as it appeared to him, of coming to this extremity. Lord Falmouth seemed agitated and very much affected, and said, nothing had ever given him so much pain, but he found it impossible to act otherwise than he had done.

"We had, during this conversation, proceeded further into the field, the Duke accompanying us at some little distance, and had got near the lodge at the opposite end of it, when we perceived some people at work, which made us turn off to the right, and leap a small ditch to get into another field, where we were less likely to meet with interruption. The Duke went on by himself; Lord Falmouth, Sir Henry, and I remained at the bank near the ditch; Lord Winchelsea, also, being near the bank, but at some little distance from us.

"I placed the pistols on the ground, and said to Sir Henry, 'As you have only one hand, perhaps you would permit me to load;' to which he replied, 'Certainly, if Lord Falmouth has no objection.' He then gave the pistols to Lord Falmouth to examine, and having afterwards returned them to me, I loaded one, and was proceeding to load the other, when Lord Falmouth said, 'Will not one be sufficient?' I re-

plied, that I thought it might save trouble afterwards, and loaded that also; and I was going with them towards the Duke, who had been joined by Sir Henry Hardinge, when he, Lord Falmouth, called to me to look at the manner in which he loaded. I answered carelessly, 'You may load, my lord, in any manner you please;' and went on. His lordship, however, appeared a good deal agitated, which I observed on turning round, and therefore went back, and offered to load for him; but he had at length succeeded in getting the ball into the mouth of the pistol, and rammed home. He thanked me politely; and whilst I stood beside him, till he finished priming (he only loaded one pistol), he stated again, more earnestly, his regret at the circumstances which had led to this meeting. I said to him, 'But surely, sir, it might have been prevented; is not Lord Winchelsea entirely to blame?—could not you have prevented it? As for the Duke, I know too well his discretion and temper in all great matters, that I am certain he could never either say or do anything to offend or to hurt any man's feelings whatever.' Lord Falmouth replied, 'I do not say whose fault it is; but I assure you it cannot be settled without this meeting.' We went together towards the Duke and Sir Henry, who were farther in the field, when Sir Henry proposed measuring the ground, and having fixed upon a spot, he said to the Duke, 'Have the goodness to place yourself here, Duke;' and then stepped off twelve paces towards the ditch, near which Lord Winchelsea was standing, and was followed by Lord Falmouth, who also paced the ground, making a mark with the heel of his boot when he came to the spot where Sir Henry had halted. Lord Winchelsea came forward, and placed himself

upon the spot marked; but as I heard him observe that Lord Falmouth had placed him between two trees, I said, 'Oh, you may stand where you please, either a little more to the right, or to the left.' And accordingly he moved two or three steps to the right. Lord Falmouth came up, and began stepping again, to ascertain that the distance was correct.

"Sir Henry then took one of the pistols from me, and placing it under his arm, he went to about halfway between Lord Winchelsea and the Duke; and taking a paper from his pocket, he called on Lord Falmouth to come near him, and Lord Winchelsea to pay attention, whilst he read it aloud. The purport of what Sir Henry said was, that he took that opportunity of protesting in the strongest manner against the necessity of pushing this affair to the extremity to which it had been urged. He reminded and warned both Lord Falmouth and Lord Winchelsea, that they alone must be answerable for the consequences which might result from this meeting, 'And,' said he, 'if I do not now express my opinion to your lordships in the same terms of disgust I have done in the progress of this affair, it is because I wish to imitate the moderation of the Duke of Wellington.' Lord Falmouth seemed much affected, and replied (I think with tears in his eyes), that nothing he had ever been concerned in had given him so much pain as the conduct he had found himself obliged to pursue upon that occasion; but that, although he entirely disapproved of the publication of the letter, which, indeed, was indefensible, what he had done was unavoidable, and that when everything was over, he was confident that even Sir Henry Hardinge would do him justice. He referred again to

some paper he said he had sent to Sir Henry, and, I think, he again asked him if he had read or seen it: to which Sir Henry replied, 'No,' and, if I recollect right, he added, 'Indeed, my Lord Falmouth, I do not envy you your feelings.' Sir Henry then said (pointing to some people who had collected at the end of the field, and were looking on), 'We had better take our ground —the sooner the affair is over, the better.'

"The Duke had remained all the time on the same spot, without speaking a word, but with a smile of good-nature upon his countenance, which displayed, on this occasion, all that calm mildness of expression which, at times, contrasts so strikingly with the manly firmness and determination of his character, when Sir Henry Hardinge went up to him, and gave him the pistol, which the Duke took and cocked. Lord Falmouth, at the same time, gave his pistol to Lord Winchelsea, and he and the Duke remained with them in their right hands, the arm being extended down by their sides. Lord Falmouth and Sir Henry Hardinge then stepped back a few paces, when Lord Falmouth said, 'Sir Henry Hardinge, I leave it entirely to you to arrange the manner of firing.' Upon which Sir Henry said, 'Then, gentlemen, I shall ask if you are ready, and give the word—'fire'—without any further signal or proposition,' which in a few seconds afterwards he did, saying, 'Gentlemen, are you ready?—fire.' The Duke raised his pistol, and presented it instantly on the word fire being given; but, as I suppose, observing that Lord Winchelsea did not immediately present at him, he seemed to hesitate for a moment, and then fired without effect.

"I think Lord Winchelsea did not present his pistol

at the Duke at all, but I cannot be quite positive, as I was wholly intent on observing the Duke, lest anything should happen to him; but when I turned my eyes towards Lord Winchelsea, after the Duke had fired, his arm was down by his side, from whence he raised it deliberately, and holding his pistol perpendicularly over his head, he fired it off into the air. The Duke remained still in his place, but Lord Winchelsea and Lord Falmouth came immediately towards Sir Henry Hardinge, and Lord Falmouth, addressing him, said: 'Lord Winchelsea having received the Duke of Wellington's fire, is placed under different circumstances from those in which he stood before, and therefore now feels himself at liberty to give the Duke the reparation he requires.' He seemed to pause for an answer; and Sir Henry replied: 'The Duke expects an ample apology, and a complete and full acknowledgment from Lord Winchelsea of his error in having published the accusation against him, which he has done.' To which Lord Falmouth answered, 'I mean an apology in the most extensive, or, in any sense of the word;' and he then took from his pocket a written paper, containing what he called an admission from Lord Winchelsea that he was in the wrong, and which, he said, was drawn up in the terms of the Duke's last memorandum.

"Upon reading it, it appeared that the word 'apology' was in no place inserted, although the paper expressed that Lord Winchelsea did not hesitate to declare, of his own accord, that he regretted having unadvisedly published an opinion which had given offence to the Duke of Wellington, and offered to cause this expression of regret to be published in the 'Standard' newspaper, as the same channel through which his former letter had been given to the public.

"The Duke, who had come nearer, and was listening attentively, said, in a low voice, 'This won't do; it is no apology;' on which Sir Henry took the paper to the Duke, and walked two or three paces on one side with him, but immediately came back saying, 'I cannot accept of this paper, unless the word "apology" be inserted.' He then took a paper from his own pocket, and was proceeding to read, saying, 'This is what we expect;' when Lord Falmouth, interrupting him, said, 'I assure you what I have written was meant as an apology.' And he entered into a discussion, asserting that the admissions contained in the paper were the same, or were quoted from those in the Duke of Wellington's own memorandum. Sir Henry said, 'My Lord Falmouth, it is needless to prolong this discussion. Unless the word "apology" be inserted, we must resume our ground;' and turning to Lord Winchelsea, whom Lord Falmouth had taken aside to converse with, he said, 'My Lord Winchelsea, this is an affair between the seconds;' on which Lord Winchelsea retired.

"After some little hesitation, Lord Falmouth said, he did not well see how he could put the paper into any other form, and referring to me he said, half aside, 'Don't you think it sufficient?' I said, 'Yes; if you insert "apology" in the body of your paper.' 'Well, Sir Henry, I will do it in this way, and that I think will serve every purpose, I will insert "apology" here, in this manner,' writing with his pencil after, 'do not hesitate to declare, of my own accord, that, *in apology*, I regret.' Sir Henry then went to the Duke, and spoke a few words, but came back almost instantly, and said to Lord Falmouth he was satisfied, or that the paper would do. He then added, 'And now, gentle-

men, without making any invidious reflections, I cannot help remarking, whether wisely or unwisely the world will judge, you have been the cause of bringing this man (pointing to the Duke) into the field, where, during the whole course of a long military life he never was before on an occasion of this nature.' The Duke came forward, bowing coldly to Lord Falmouth and Lord Winchelsea; the former of whom seemed greatly affected, and stated that he had always thought, and told Lord Winchelsea, that he was completely in the wrong; on which Sir Henry remarked, that if he did so, and came with the writer of the letter to the ground, his lordship had done that which he, Sir Henry, would not do for the dearest friend he had on earth.

"Lord Falmouth then addressed himself to the Duke in vindication of his conduct, and was beginning to express the pain and anxiety he had experienced during the whole of these proceedings; but the Duke interrupted him, lifting up his hands and saying, 'My Lord Falmouth, I have nothing to say to these matters.' He then touched the brim of his hat, saying, 'Good morning, my Lord Falmouth; Good morning, my Lord Winchelsea,' and mounted his horse. Sir Henry having also got on horseback, saying, 'I wish you good morning, my lords,' they both rode quickly off the ground."

Long after these transactions had ceased to occupy public attention, the writer of this history took advantage of the Duke's great kindness to refer to them in one of those confidential conversations with which he was occasionally honoured. His Grace's opinion respecting the propriety, indeed the necessity of the course which he followed on the occasion, had under-

gone no change. "You speak as a moralist," he observed smiling, "and I assure you that I am no advocate of duelling under ordinary circumstances; but my difference with Lord Winchelsea, considering the cause in which it originated, and the critical position of affairs at the moment, can scarcely be regarded as a private quarrel. He refused to me, being the King's minister, what every man in or out of office may fairly claim,—the right to change his views under a change of circumstances on a great public question. He did his best to establish the principle, that a man in my situation must be a traitor, unless he adhere through thick and thin to a policy once advocated. His attack upon me was part of a plan to render the conduct of public affairs impossible to the King's servants. I did my best to make him understand the nature of the mistake into which he had fallen, and to escape from it. He refused to do so, and there remained for me only one means of extorting from him an acknowledgment that he was wrong."

"But he behaved well on the ground, at all events; he refused to fire at you."

"Certainly he did not fire at me; and seeing that such was his intention, I turned my pistol aside, and fired wide of him; but that did not make amends for the outrageous charge brought against me in his letter. It was only the admission that the charge was outrageous which at all atoned for that; and it would have been more creditable to him had he made it, when first requested to do so, than at last. He behaved, however, with great coolness, and was, and I am sure continues to be, very sorry that he allowed his temper to run away with him."

CHAP. XIV.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIEF BILL. — BREAK UP OF PARTIES. — IRELAND NOT PACIFIED. — PARLIAMENTARY REFORM. — THE BIRMINGHAM POLITICAL UNION. — BREACH WITH THE WHIGS. — DEATH OF GEORGE IV., AND ACCESSION OF WILLIAM IV. — DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT. — REVOLUTION IN FRANCE. — DISTURBANCES AT HOME. — DEATH OF MR. HUSKISSON. — MEETING OF PARLIAMENT. — THE KING DOES NOT DINE WITH THE LORD MAYOR. — DEFEAT OF MINISTERS ON THE CIVIL LIST. — THEY RESIGN.

1829-30.

It belongs to the historian of the period, rather than to the biographer of the Duke of Wellington, to describe the progress of the bill for Catholic Emancipation through both houses of parliament. Proposed in the Commons by Mr. Peel, and in the Lords by the Duke, it produced a long and animated discussion, into which, as might be expected, no small amount of personal feeling was introduced. There was not, however, from the outset any cause of serious apprehension respecting the issue. On the 31st of March the bill came to the Upper from the Lower House, and was read a first time. On the 2nd of April it passed the second reading. On the 8th it came out of committee, and on the 13th it received the royal assent. The Duke spoke well in defence of the policy which he had recommended. He combated the notion, that to restore to his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects the political rights of which, under special circumstances,

they had been deprived, was either in principle or in fact an attack upon the constitution; and he got rid of the objection which turned upon the terms of the Act of Union with Scotland, by showing that the act in question could not possibly be intended to prevent, in all time coming, the united parliament from framing such laws as the interests of the United Kingdom might require. But perhaps the most painful part of the discussion to the Duke, was the necessity which it imposed upon him of condemning the administration in Ireland of his old comrade, the Marquis of Anglesey. That nobleman, irritated at his recall, entered, in the House of Lords, into explanations, which, to say the least, were little called for; and compelled the Duke in his own defence to show—that the proceedings of the Lord-Lieutenant had been, from the moment of his arrival in Dublin, injudicious in themselves, and embarrassing to the government which he served. This, however, with the rupture of other old ties, the severance from men with whom, throughout the whole of his political life, he had been in close intimacy, was the penalty which the Duke knew that he should be called upon to pay, for an act which was, on his part, one of pure patriotism. Had he chosen to adhere to a policy of exclusion, he might, as he himself well expressed it, "have made himself the most popular minister that ever presided over the councils of his sovereign;" but he must have acquired this popularity at the expense of great and probably continuous suffering to the country. It was not in his nature to hesitate when such a choice lay before him. He pursued what he believed to be the path of right, and reaped his reward.

Was he correct in the view which he took of the case in question, and wise in the decision at which he arrived? We cannot believe that there are now two opinions among reflecting men on that subject. It is true, that agitation did not cease in Ireland simultaneously with the passing of the Catholic Relief bill. How could it? The safeguards against priestly influence, provided by the original draft of the bill, had been struck out in deference to misplaced Protestant scruples; and there were others, besides the priests, deep in the confidence of the Irish people, to whom a state of repose would have been ruin. Besides, it would be absurd to deny, that in 1829, Ireland had other grievances to complain of than the exclusion of the vast majority of her sons from political power and place. For a season, therefore, agitation went on as before, new ground being taken up by those who profited by it, and new claims brought forward in vindication of their conduct. But all these, as the event has shown, lost their value in the eyes, even of the mob, in proportion as plans of practical utility came into operation. Who will pretend to say, that such measures as an Irish Poor Law, an Encumbered Estates' Act, or the equalising of taxation between Great Britain and Ireland, ever could have been carried, had the old sore of the exclusion of Roman Catholics from power remained open? And without these measures, and the consequent improvements which have attended them in agriculture, in manufactures, in education, and in the habits of society, would Ireland have become what she now is? We are far from under-rating the amount of inconvenience which the admission of Roman Catholics into parliament has occasioned. To such as adhere

to the old doctrine of Church and State, the presence in the legislature of a body of men, morally pledged to the severance of that tie, cannot but prove distasteful. And the steady advance of Romanism in power and influence, which the condition of parties in the House of Commons renders inevitable, is naturally regarded by Protestants of all denominations with dismay. But this latter evil, since an evil we must admit it to be, is not of the Duke's creation. Parliaments chosen under the constitution of 1829 would have been little inconvenienced by the united action of thirty or forty members, had they always acted together. Parliaments elected by the constituencies which the great measure of 1832 called into being, are very differently circumstanced. Whether that fresh revision of the constitution, which seems to be inevitable, will effect any change in this respect, and of what nature the change will be, time alone can determine.

The immediate consequence to the Duke and his administration of the parliamentary success of which we are now speaking, was disastrous in the extreme. Almost to a man, the old Tories fell from them, while of the Whigs, not one acknowledged leader gave them a cordial support. It is true that the Whig party rejoiced that a measure was carried to which they had themselves long been friendly, and that they stepped in, from time to time, to protect the government against their former supporters. But even on such occasions care was taken to make them feel the weight of the obligation conferred; while the country was ostentatiously assured, that the king's ministers, though they clung to place and profit, were without power. Elsewhere, too, a soreness rankled; which showed it-

self in numberless trifling, yet unmistakable discourtesies. Prejudices long cherished, and up to the last moment avowed, had been trampled under foot. Personal feeling, if not outraged, was wounded; and, as invariably happens in such cases, the sort of respect which is akin to fear, engendered restlessness, and a desire to throw off a yoke which had become intolerable. It would have been difficult for a government so circumstanced to hold its ground, had all other circumstances been favourable; and events were already in progress which rendered the long continuance of the Duke of Wellington and his colleagues in office impossible.

The remainder of the session of 1829 passed over, if not triumphantly for the ministers, at all events without exposing them to any serious check. They attempted nothing great or startling, and they carried their measures, such as they were, by fair majorities. Their budget provoked little criticism, and no serious opposition. A motion to inquire, by select committee, into the distress which prevailed, especially among the silk weavers, they opposed; and they succeeded in obtaining the admission into the British market of raw silk, on payment of a reduced duty. Still the temper of both Houses continued to be sullen, perhaps angry; and when on the 24th of June gentlemen were relieved from further attendance in parliament, not a few of them withdrew into their respective counties, out of humour with themselves and with the government, and meditating revenge.

It was the Duke's habit, which he did not intermit while prime minister, to spend the recess partly at Strathfieldsaye, partly at Walmer Castle; paying at intervals visits to his friends in other parts of the country,

and accepting their hospitalities as freely as he dispensed his own. When public business pressed, he remained sometimes for a week together in London. Sometimes he would travel post to and from the capital, quitting Walmer or Strathfieldsaye early in the morning, and returning again in time for dinner. We refer to these not very important matters, because they connect themselves with an endeavour which was made in the course of this summer to renew the Duke's political alliance with Mr. Huskisson. The friends of the existing administration could not shut their eyes to the fact, that it was scarcely strong enough in the House of Commons to command a majority on any question of doubtful tendency. The Whigs professed, indeed, their readiness to coalesce; but it must be upon their own terms. They would serve with the Duke, but scarcely under him; they were willing to render him their undivided support, on condition that he admitted them to a fair share of place in and out of the cabinet. This, however, he declined to do. He had taken Sir James Scarlett as his Attorney-General, on the defection of Sir Charles Wetherell; and having removed Mr. Tindal to the Court of Common Pleas, he made Mr. Sugden his Solicitor-General. He was liberal also in his church patronage to Lord Grey and other Whig leaders; but with the Whigs as a party he could not act. The Tories, on the other hand, had become perfectly rabid in their indignation. They charged him with a violation of public faith, with want of statesmanship, with indifference to the wishes and necessities of the people, with a determination to govern the country as if he commanded an army. They even joined in the Whig cry for parliamentary reform, and spoke openly of removing the

bishops from the House of Lords. Upon the Duke himself these clamours made little impression. He was determined to govern for the public good, or not to govern at all; and he hoped that by bringing forward only just measures, he might be able to defeat personal hostility, by balancing one political faction against another. But his friends thought otherwise, and having arrived at the conclusion that it would be well, under the circumstances, to gain over the Canningites, one of them invited the Duke to meet Mr. Huskisson at his country house. The statesmen met; but no political reconciliation followed. The Duke was personally civil, and even kind to Mr. Huskisson, with whom, indeed, he denied that he had ever had any quarrel; but recollections of the past were too strong with him to permit his going further. How far Mr. Huskisson was privy to the object for which he and the Duke had been brought together, we are not prepared to say. But his deportment in the next session, which became keenly and even bitterly adverse, seemed to indicate that he had been led to entertain hopes which were never realised.

Besides this abortive endeavour to heal an old wound, there occurred little in the interval between the prorogation and the re-assembling of parliament with which the Duke's biographer is especially concerned. Foreign affairs went on under Lord Aberdeen's management as they had previously done. Portugal appeared to be satisfied with Don Miguel, for though he wielded his power sternly against individuals, nothing like a national rising occurred. Had the Duke been free to follow the dictates of his own judgment, he would have at once resumed the diplomatic relations which had

been broken off between the two states. But England was committed to the young queen by the policy of the preceding administration, and the Duke, though he believed that policy to be unwise, could not break through it in a moment. Neither was he satisfied with the turn which affairs had taken in the east. The treaty of Adrianople (which brought the war between Russia and Turkey to a close) gave great umbrage both to him and to his foreign minister. It contained stipulations so much at variance with the pledges which three years previously the emperor had given, that the question was seriously debated in the cabinet whether England ought not to protest against them. On an assurance from Russia, however, that the obnoxious clauses were inserted only *in terrorem;* that she entertained no design of acting upon them, either then or at any future time, his Grace was induced, rather than become the cause of prolonged hostilities in Europe, to give way. Yet his private correspondence shows, that he not only did so with reluctance, but that he was fully alive to the spirit of unfair dealing which guided the councils of Russia throughout the whole of the negotiation. It was some compensation for the wrong, that to Greece, of which the independence was now acknowledged, a government not Russian was assigned. The prince of Saxe-Coburg, as is well known, first received and accepted the offer of the crown; which, however, on more mature deliberation, he judged it expedient to decline. But Count Capo d'Istria, who was strongly suspected of having helped to bring about this disappointment, gained nothing by it. He ceased to be president without ascending the throne, and Prince Otho of Bavaria became king of Greece.

Such was the state of affairs at home and abroad, when, on the 4th of February, 1830, the Duke again met parliament as prime minister. It was obvious from the first that the Tory grudges of the past session were not softened down, and that Whig support was less to be relied upon than ever. The address in answer to the King's speech was resisted in both Houses, the Duke of Richmond and Lord Eldon speaking against it in the Lords, Sir Edward Knatchbull and Lord Blandford leading the opposition in the Commons. Lord Lansdowne, on the other hand, and Lord Goderich, both spoke on the ministerial side in the Upper House, and Lord Althorpe in the Lower. But their party by no means followed them. The consequence was that, when the division took place, the address was carried by a body so heterogeneous, that the readiest calculator would have paused before risking a conjecture as to the probable fate of any other important measure which the government might bring forward.

The great cry in the country was at that time for retrenchment, and the Duke had already shown, that no minister was ever more willing than he to listen to it. It may be questioned, indeed, looking to subsequent events, whether he did not carry the principle of economy too far. It is certain that he reduced both the navy and the army to such a state, as rendered England virtually powerless if any sudden call had been made upon her military resources. But it was a game of brag between the government and the opposition, such as will never, we trust, be played again. The latter bade against the former, recklessly; and though defeated in most instances, they gained one not unimportant victory. Two names stood at that time upon the pension list; — that

of Mr. R. Dundas, for 500*l.*, and that of Mr. W. Bathurst for 400*l.* a year. They were both very young men. They had been commissioners of the navy for a few months only, and were now reduced and provided for. A fierce onslaught was made upon the government for this arrangement, and after mustering all their strength, the ministers were beaten. They accepted the defeat as a pretty sure index of the temper of the House of Commons, and especially of the Whig and Canningite sections of it; but as it was not of such a nature as to imply the necessity of resignation, they went forward with the ordinary business of the session, and conducted it, upon the whole, successfully.

It is impossible to look back upon the period at which we have now arrived without being struck with the number and magnitude of the difficulties with which the Duke's administration was beset. Ireland, instead of being pacified by the healing measure, seemed to have become more unmanageable than before. Mr. O'Connell was in the field again with new demands, all pointing towards a dissolution of the union; while priests and people, retaining their old organisation, collected funds for his use, and moved or stood still at his bidding. In England and Scotland, also, trade was dull, producing, as dulness in trade always does, discontent as well as suffering; and there were not wanting persons, far above the rank of common demagogues, to foster the angry feeling, with a view to embarrass the government. Hence the cry for parliamentary reform, which had ceased in a great measure to command attention, was taken up and repeated from all parts of the country. In the manufacturing districts, especially, the opinion gained ground, that nothing would ever be done to

benefit the working classes till the large towns were represented in parliament; and the term "borough-monger" began to be applied as one of reproach to the owners of close boroughs, particularly if they happened to be Tories.

It was amid this confusion of parties that the Birmingham Political Union, the parent of all similar bodies which afterwards appeared in England, as it was itself the legitimate offspring of the Irish Catholic Association, took its rise. It consisted of persons of various ranks in society, of bankers, lawyers, master-manufacturers, and their men, who, with Mr. Atwood at their head, formed themselves into an association, for the avowed purpose of forcing upon the legislature a comprehensive measure of parliamentary reform. It does not appear that as yet Mr. Atwood and his followers had worked out the ideal of any plan, which alone they were prepared to accept. Their views, on the contrary, seem to have been vague and general, scarcely passing beyond the abstract opinion, that the constitution had grown corrupt, and must be mended. But as they were in constant communication with individuals of greater political consideration than themselves, so they appear to have been ready, even thus early, to shape their course according to the suggestions which others might make to them. The existence of this union, as well as its connection with powerful parties in the legislature, was not unknown to the ministers; but as its proceedings were conducted with perfect regularity, and its leaders neither wrote up rebellion, nor spoke sedition, the Duke and those who acted with him considered that it would be unwise to confer upon it meretricious importance, by taking any steps to put it down.

No great while elapsed, however, before the mutterings of the storm began to make themselves heard nearer home. Lord Howick, who, like his father, Earl Grey, had throughout his political career been a consistent reformer, brought forward a motion, early in March, "for some general comprehensive measure, as the only means of checking the scandalous abuses which prevail." It was lost by a narrow majority of only 27: the numbers being 99 for, and 126 against the resolution. By and by, on the 18th, the Marquis of Blandford, a Tory, and up to the preceding year a steady supporter of things as they were, proposed a measure so sweeping, that the motive under which he acted could not be mistaken. He was defeated by 160 to 57. But the most formidable attack of all was led by Lord John Russell on the 29th, when he moved for leave to bring in a bill "to enable the towns of Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, to return members to parliament." Lord John was followed, on that occasion, not only by all the Whigs and Radicals, but by the Canningites, with Mr. Huskisson at their head; and his bill was rejected by a majority of only 48—140 members voting with, and 188 against him.

However satisfied the Duke's government might be with the rectitude of their own intentions, and the wisdom of the policy which they were pursuing, they could not regard such movements as these except with alarm. It was evident that the public mind was ill at ease, and that the constitution, as it existed, had lost the confidence of a large and influential section of the legislature and of the people. Nor let it for a moment be supposed that, whatever might be the opinions of others, the Duke of Wel-

lington was blind to the abuses which had of late years crept in upon our parliamentary system. To close boroughs, considered as an essential feature in the constitution, he was not averse. He regarded them, on the contrary, both then and to the end of his life, as a great, perhaps the greatest, bulwark of imperial government, in the abstract; but he had no patience for the grasping ambition and greed of individuals, which prompted them to buy up borough after borough, and to render themselves thereby all-powerful in the legislature. "They are blind," he used to say, "to their own interests, which cannot be separated from those of the state. They do not see that they are perverting to the worst purposes an institution which ought to have been rendered subservient to the best. Instead of leaving these boroughs so distributed, that men of all shades of political opinion, and representing all the great interests of the empire, may, if they possess but talent and character, find their way through them into the House of Commons, they go into the market, and purchase up one after another, with no other end in view than to provide for their own dependents, and promote their own objects. Over and over again it has been pressed upon me to become the proprietor of a borough; but I would have nothing to say to the proposal—I would not dirty my fingers with so vile a job."

Still, rising above an abuse which time, he hoped, and experience might mitigate, the Duke saw the advantage which the crown derived from the existence of nomination boroughs. For it was no part of his political creed, that the masses are the best judges of how they and the empire ought to be governed.

He believed that to be the best form of government which ensures full protection to life and property; which gives the freest exercise to talent, and the largest possible share of personal liberty to individuals, and throws open the great prizes in public and in private life to universal competition. But all this he held to be incompatible with the transference of power to any one class, and least of all to that class, which, being deficient both in education and in property, must have everything to gain and nothing to lose in a scramble. As has elsewhere been shown, the Duke was not opposed to the gradual enfranchisement of large towns. Had the views which he advocated in the cabinet, with respect to East Retford, been followed that fact would have been proved. But they were defeated, and now the tide seemed setting in such a direction that any attempt to control or direct it must inevitably fail. He made up his mind, therefore, thus early to resist all change, and he succeeded for a brief space.

Among other causes of the Duke's unpopularity at this juncture, was the prosecution for libel which he instituted, through the Attorney-General, against Mr. Alexander, the editor of the "Morning Journal." There had appeared in that paper a series of articles, so far transcending the limits of fair controversy, that the Duke, as responsible minister of the crown, felt himself obliged to take proceedings; and a verdict was obtained against Mr. Alexander, which led to a sentence of fine and imprisonment. In the temper of the times at that period, such a sentence had no other effect than to secure to the object of it a crown of martyrdom. Mr. Alexander was visited daily at his apartments in the

King's Bench by leading politicians, while a motion was made in the House of Commons, tending rather to fix odium on the government which prosecuted, than on the individual who had been the object of the prosecution. Moreover, the government sustained a check, for it can hardly be called a defeat, in a bill for modifying the legal punishment of forgery. Mr. Peel, anxious to render the penal code less bloody, proposed to inflict the penalty of death only on persons committing such forgeries as could not by proper precaution be guarded against. Sir James Mackintosh, on the third reading of the bill, moved a clause for omitting the penalty of death altogether, and carried it by a majority of 151 against 138.

And thus the session wore on in that sort of parliamentary warfare which leaves neither side satisfied with the issue of the contest, till in the month of April it first became publicly known, that the health of George the Fourth was failing. On the 24th of May, the malady had gained such a height, that the King was no longer able to affix his signature to papers of state; and a bill was passed, authorising the sign manual to be adhibited by a stamp. But the King never rallied. From week to week, and day to day, the disease gained upon him, and at last, on the 26th of June, he expired. He was a man with many faults, and few virtues. His intellect was superior to his moral nature; but it was not transcendent. He appears never to have given his undivided confidence to any minister, but always to have aimed at keeping up what he called a King's party. He professed for the Duke of Wellington unbounded love and admiration. That he admired his Grace, as meaner natures admire natures that are above them, cannot be doubted; but his love

was never such as to prevent him from intriguing and plotting against the object of it. It is beyond dispute that the Duke exercised great influence over him, but it was the influence of a superior mind over an inferior. Still his death, at that critical moment, was to the Duke, and to statesmen who thought with him, a grievous calamity. It necessitated the dissolution of a parliament, which, though somewhat difficult to manage, was not likely to be succeeded by another more manageable. And it was followed, almost immediately, by sure tokens of growing hostility in all quarters.

It was the wish of the government not to undertake any fresh business of importance at an advanced season of the year and with an expiring parliament. They therefore prepared for the new sovereign a speech, which addressed itself to the sympathies of both Houses, in reference to the domestic calamity which his Majesty had recently experienced; and invited the Commons to make such arrangements as would enable his ministers to carry on the affairs of government till a new parliament could be called. At once, and to a man, the whole body of the Whigs passed over into the ranks of the opposition. Up to that moment they had encouraged the belief that, sooner or later, the Duke would propose a coalition, and hence, though neither unanimous nor hearty in the support which they gave him, they had more than once stood between him and a parliamentary defeat. Now they saw that, come what might, he was resolved to form no intimate connexion with them; and, accepting his present attitude as a declaration of war, they entered into the contest heartily. It was moved by Earl Grey in the Lords, and by Lord Althorpe in the Commons, that the parliament ought not to separate without providing for

the possible contingency of a lapse of the crown to a minor; for William the Fourth was childless, and the Princess Victoria still under age. The motion failed in both Houses; but so weak had the government become, that in the Commons they carried their point by what was then accounted a very inconsiderable majority. In a full house, they defeated Lord Althorpe by 47 votes only. In consequence of this vote, the dissolution took place on the 23rd of July, and the new parliament was ordered to assemble on the 14th of September.

Had there been nothing against the ministers except their own personal unpopularity, their chances in a general election so brought about would have been doubtful. But events occurred on the continent, which not only increased their difficulties fourfold, but proved largely instrumental in bringing about the results of which we shall presently have occasion to speak. The evils of the representative system, as it had been established in France, became intolerable. Instead of seeking a remedy in the modification of that system, Charles the Tenth tried the experiment of a *coup d'état*. It resulted in a three days' battle in the streets of Paris, and on the 30th of July the elder branch of the house of Bourbon went again into exile. We need not pause to describe the effect produced throughout Europe by that astounding revolution. The inhabitants of Brussels began with resistance to local taxes, and ended by driving the Dutch garrison out of the city, and proclaiming the dissolution of the union between Belgium and Holland. Poland, occupied by native troops, which, whether wisely or not, the czar had kept in a state of complete severance from the rest of his army, hoisted the national standard, and declared

herself independent. In Germany, Italy, and, indeed, all over the continent, popular movements began, which caused much uneasiness to the governments, and were not repressed without an effort. It would have been marvellous, circumstanced as England then was, had the shock of the moral earthquake failed to reach her. Everywhere the minds of men were prepared to receive impressions unfavourable to authority in general, and to the existing administration in particular. The Duke was spoken of as a mere soldier; his system as that of the camp, not of the republic. He had broken through the constitution on one vital point, and was preparing to break through it upon others. There was but one remedy for the evil. The constituencies must elect men pledged to support a large measure of parliamentary reform and to expel the dictator from office. It would be difficult to exaggerate the extent to which this spirit of unfairness was carried. The Birmingham Political Union, no doubt, followed its natural vocation when it assured the people that they were tyrannised over, and that the Duke was their tyrant. And in the mouths of the Whigs, the same assertion might be regarded as a legitimate argument in party warfare. But the language of both was mild in comparison with that to which the old Tories gave utterance; and the combination of the three parties prevailed. It soon became apparent, as return after return came in, that the government had not gained ground; and that if supported at all in the ensuing session, it would be by a majority too inconsiderable to be relied upon in the hour of danger.

The conduct of the Duke under the circumstances was in perfect keeping with the whole tenor of his

public life. He positively refused to bring the influence of the government to bear on any single election. He forbade his representatives at the Cinque Ports, where in those days the Lord Warden was very powerful, to canvass in his name, or to use any means of threat or promise in order to obtain votes. His theory was, and to the last day of his life he avowed and acted upon it, that the right of electing members to serve in parliament is a great constitutional privilege, and that as they who possess that privilege are responsible to the country for the use to which they turn it, so every interference with their free will, whether for party or personal purposes, is an outrage both to public and private morals. Accordingly, while others were occupied with electioneering and its results, he applied his undivided attention to the management of the general affairs of the country, which, both at home and abroad, were at that moment in a very critical state. The French revolution he accepted as an accomplished fact. There was neither doubt nor hesitation on his part, or on the part of his colleagues, with regard to that matter. Indeed, the change of dynasty had not been officially communicated to them many hours, when a meeting of the cabinet took place, and a special messenger was on his way to Paris with instructions to the English minister there to acknowledge and enter into friendly relations with the existing government. This was a bold step, considering the nature of the treaties which connected England at that time with the other powers of Europe; but it was both just and wise. Any show of reluctance, however guarded—any disposition to wait till the views of other governments could be ascertained,

would have inevitably produced the most disastrous consequences. Indeed, it is not going too far to say, that the Duke's promptitude in acknowledging the right of the French people to choose their own sovereign, alone preserved Europe from the horrors of war. Let us not, however, forget to add, that his Grace lost no time in making such communications to the cabinets of Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, as the circumstances of the case appeared to require; and that if he failed to persuade them into the adoption of a similar line of policy with his own, he at all events reconciled them to the course which England had taken, and held them back from assuming an attitude of hostility or threatening towards France.

It was one thing to deal in this spirit of frankness with a great power like France, which was, or seemed to be, unanimous in the course on which it had entered; it was quite another to sanction the insurrection in Belgium, and the attempt to erect two separate states out of one. With the latter arrangement the Duke was by no means satisfied. Having been largely instrumental in establishing the kingdom of the Netherlands as a barrier against the power of France in the north, he was very little disposed to look, except with disapprobation, at the overthrow of the work of his own hands. Besides, the union between Holland and Belgium seemed to him to be as much a portion of the great European settlement of 1815, as the occupation of Lombardy and Venetia by Austria; and he therefore contended that, till the authority which had brought the two states together should pronounce for their severance, it was not competent to England or to any other individual power to recognise their separate

independence. Hence, he not only held aloof from the overtures which the agents of Belgium made to him, but he advised the French government to discountenance them in like manner, and was by no means pleased with the excuses which the latter gave for the support which they rendered, willingly or otherwise, to the insurgent party.

If the Foreign Office was kept busy by the coming and going of messages on which the external peace of the world depended, there was enough in the internal condition of the united kingdoms themselves to keep the Home Office not only busy but anxious. Ireland, as we have already said, had reverted to a state of perfect misrule, a demand for the dissolution of the union having succeeded to the clamour for Catholic emancipation. How it was urged, and how resisted, it is the province of the historian of the period to tell. But the effect of the movement on public opinion was adverse in the extreme to the Duke and his administration. Meanwhile, in England a spirit began to manifest itself more threatening than had been witnessed there since 1817 and 1818. Not in the manufacturing counties alone, but in districts purely agricultural, a war of class against class seemed impending. The labourers complained that the farmers would not employ them, or if they did, that the wages which they received were inadequate; the farmers declared themselves unable to find their men in work, or to pay them as they ought to do. Speakers at public meetings and writers in newspapers threw the entire blame of all this upon the government; and noblemen and gentlemen eager for office, or bent upon political revenge, stood forward to endorse the assertion. It transpired

that the revolution in France had been preceded by a succession of incendiary fires in Normandy; and either through the power of sympathy, or because the agents of mischief availed themselves of the circumstance, fires soon began to break out in the English counties nearest to France. Kent set in this respect the bad example, which soon extended to Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, and other places; till night after night, in the most fertile districts of the south, the sky was reddened with the blaze of burning stack-yards. Then followed a more open attack upon property, labouring people going about in open day, and compelling farmers and others to bring out their threshing machines that they might be broken. The government did its best to put down these riots and restore order; but though it partially succeeded, by distributing troops through the most unquiet of the counties, it more and more enlisted against itself the prejudices both of those who suffered from the outrages and of the classes who committed them.

And yet the country, in spite of so many appearances to the contrary, was making rapid advances in prosperity and intelligence. Building went on to a prodigious extent everywhere. Agriculture, and even commerce, though partially restrained by influences evanescent in their nature, were both expanding; and the application of steam to purposes of locomotion, as well by land as by sea, was paving the way for changes of the most momentous kind. It was in the autumn of this year that the railway between Liverpool and Manchester, the first ever constructed for the conveyance of passengers, was opened; and the Duke having been invited to be present on the occa-

sion, proceeded from Walmer Castle to play his part in the ceremony. Mr. Huskisson, who represented Liverpool in the House of Commons, was also present; and they took their seats in two carriages, which, for some reason or other, were made to run on parallel lines; one row of three carriages running on one line of rail, while another of six carriages ran on the other line. Both rows thus took the same direction, each being dragged by its own engine.

The trains quitted Liverpool at twenty minutes to eleven o'clock, on the morning of the 15th of September. They travelled at the rate of about fifteen miles an hour,—an amount of speed to go beyond which would have been considered at that time rash, if not presumptuous. The passengers were all warned not on any account to quit their seats; indeed printed handbills, conveying this injunction, were hung up in every carriage. In spite of all this, however, when the trains stopped at Parkside station to take in water, Mr. Huskisson, with several other gentlemen, alighted. It would appear, indeed, that a strong desire to join the Duke had taken possession, either of him or of his friends, for he crossed the open space between the two lines of rail with Mr. Holmes, and then went towards the carriage in which the Duke was seated. His Grace held out his hand from the window, which Mr. Huskisson shook heartily. Scarcely was this done, when a cry arose that the train on the parallel line was in motion, and that passengers must instantly resume their seats. All except Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Holmes appear to have done so; but these gentlemen, either because they had strayed too far from their proper places, or because their minds were occupied with other matters,

stood still.. Mr. Holmes, indeed, with admirable coolness, drew himself up, with his back against the projecting ledge of the Duke's carriage, and was safe. Mr. Huskisson, whose presence of mind seemed to have entirely forsaken him, grasped at the door of the same carriage. It flew open, just as the engine which dragged the parallel line came up, and being struck by one of the buffers, it knocked Mr. Huskisson backwards. He fell with his leg across the rail, and the entire train passed over it. "I have met my death! God forgive me," exclaimed the unfortunate statesman, and the event too surely justified the anticipation.

It is under circumstances such as this, when evils unlooked for suddenly befall, that men's real natures exhibit themselves. All who witnessed the accident were shocked; the Duke seemed to be overwhelmed with grief and consternation. He was the first, when the train stopped, to go up to the wounded man, and to speak to him in terms of encouragement and commiseration; after which he suggested to the mayor of Liverpool the propriety of abandoning the excursion. But when it was represented to him, that not only would the disappointment at Manchester be very great, because the entire population was turned out to witness the arrival of the train, but that the interests of the Company and the reputation of the engineer might suffer, he yielded. The procession went forward, while Mr. Huskisson was removed to Eccles, where the best medical assistance was rendered to him; and where, after a few minutes of great suffering, he expired.

The writer of these pages happened to be a guest at Walmer Castle when the Duke returned from that excursion. His Grace spoke much of the wondrous

machine which for the first time he had seen in action, touching often with great feeling on the accident which threw so dark a cloud over the enterprise; yet he seemed by no means to have received an impression that railroads must, sooner or later, put all other means of ordinary travelling out of fashion. He believed, on the contrary, that it would never become possible rightly to control the movement of carriages propelled upon lines of rails by steam; and that the attempt to keep up a continuous speed of more than ten or twelve miles an hour must be attended with great danger. He was by no means singular in this belief; indeed, so universal was the persuasion, that Mr. Stephenson himself, in order to avoid provoking opposition, which he might have found it impossible to overcome, promised no more at the outset than an average rate of ten miles an hour. But there was this peculiarity about the Duke's convictions, that if they were once fully impressed upon his mind, it was next to impossible to remove them. Hence, in spite of the success which attended the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, he refused directly or indirectly to countenance the extension of the system in other quarters. When it was proposed to connect London with Southampton, he gave to the project all the opposition in his power. Nor could he ever be persuaded to travel by rail, till the impossibility of finding relays of horses along the neglected roads of Kent and Hampshire, forced him at last, sorely against his will, to cease from posting.

Time passed; and amid scenes such as we have now described,—while dissatisfaction prevailed in the great towns, and incendiarism was rife in the rural districts,—the period fixed for the meeting of parliament drew on.

On the 26th of October the Houses met, and the results of the general election became manifest. It was clear that the Duke's government had gained no accession of strength. A majority of the English counties, almost all the larger, and many of the smaller boroughs, had declared against them. For it was one of the unfortunate peculiarities of their position, that many of the owners of rotten boroughs were hostile to them; and that, except upon a cry of parliamentary reform, which they refused to raise, such borough proprietors could not be opposed. In Ireland, as a matter of course, opposition was rampant. Scotland alone remained true. Still the issues proved to be so far doubtful, that neither on the election of a speaker nor on the address in answer to the King's speech, was the government defeated. No doubt the tone of the discussion—for a debate it can scarcely be called—which ensued on the latter motion, was ominous. In the Commons, Mr. Brougham concluded a violent tirade by giving notice of his early intention to introduce a bill for the reform of parliament; while in the Lords, Earl Grey indulged in a species of criticism which made itself felt far beyond the limits of Great Britain. But, perhaps, the most damaging incident of all, was the nature of the reply which the Duke was hurried into delivering, and of which the enemies of the administration, both in and out of parliament, certainly made the most. The circumstances of the case were these.

On the 2nd of November, William IV. opened the session in person, and his speech touched on all the most important topics of the day. It referred to the change of dynasty in France, as to an event which was settled and accepted. It alluded, with regret, to the

movement in the Netherlands, which was described as a revolt against the authority of a considerate sovereign. It noticed the troubled condition of other countries in Europe, and expressed a hope that his Majesty would soon be in a condition to renew his friendly relations with Portugal. Neither was the disturbed state of the southern counties of England passed over, while indignation was expressed at the advantage which was taken of it to imbue the minds of the people with disloyalty to the throne and to the constitution. It was not to be expected, looking to the temper of either House, that such declarations would escape criticism. Lord Winchelsea and the Duke of Richmond rang the changes on military government and agricultural distress. Earl Grey took a wider range, and, denouncing the tone in which the revolution in Belgium had been noticed, went on to say, that nothing short of a large measure of parliamentary reform could save Great Britain from a like calamity. The Duke answered Earl Grey; and his speech, it must be acknowledged, produced an effect diametrically the reverse of that which it was intended to produce.

After noticing Lord Grey's objections to the policy suggested in the King's speech, his Grace observed: "The noble earl has alluded to the propriety of effecting parliamentary reform. I have never read or heard of any measure, up to the present moment, which can in any way satisfy my mind that the state of the representation could be improved, or be rendered more satisfactory to the country at large, than at this moment. I will not, however, at such an unseasonable time, enter upon the subject, or excite discussion; but I shall not hesitate to declare unequivocally what my

sentiments are upon it. I am fully convinced that the country possesses, at the present moment, a legislature which answers all the good purposes of legislation; and that to a greater degree than any legislature ever has answered in any country whatever. I will go farther, and say, that the legislature and the system of representation possess the full and entire confidence of the country, — deservedly possess that confidence, — and the discussions in the legislature deservedly have a very great influence over the opinions of the country. I will go still farther, and say, that if, at the present moment, I had imposed upon me the duty of forming a legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions,—I do not mean to assert that I could form such a legislature as we possess now, for the nature of man is incapable of reaching such excellence at once;—but my great endeavour would be to form some description of legislature which should produce the same results."

Having made this point clear by showing that property of every kind was fairly represented in parliament, and that property in land, as it was the only permanent property, so it rightly exercised a preponderating influence in the legislature, his Grace wound up with these emphatic words: "I am not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of this nature, but I will at once declare, that, as far as I am concerned, as long as I hold any situation in the government of this country, I shall always feel it my duty to resist such measures, when proposed by others."

The time will come, let us hope that it has already arrived, when through the mists of party spirit, and

personal prejudice which then darkened the political horizon, the true end and object of this celebrated speech will be discerned. It was accepted at the moment as a frank and open avowal of determined hostility to change, even for the better. All men of all parties condemned it,—ministerialists, because it was wanting in official reserve; Tories, because it contradicted crotchets taken up for the nonce and avowed in sheer anger; Whigs, because it served their purpose, as a party, to distort and misrepresent; and Radicals, because they believed their Whig leaders, and were bent on sweeping measures. Yet when fairly analysed, it will be found to bear out completely the interpretation which the Duke himself, both in conversation and by his correspondence, invariably put upon it. It enunciates no hostility to change in the abstract, provided change were shown to be for the better. It deals only with such schemes as Canning, and other constitutional statesmen, of schools more liberal than his, had condemned. It expresses a conviction on the part of the speaker, that he had never heard or read of a less objectionable system of representation than prevailed at that time in England. It does not pronounce nomination boroughs, far less the accumulation of groups of them in the hands of individuals, to be in themselves excellences. The speaker asserts no more than this; that under the system as it then existed, all the interests of the country were fairly represented in parliament; that in his opinion the landed interest, because it was the most important of all, exerted, as it ought to do, a preponderating influence in both Houses; and that, till some better means of securing the great end of all government, the promotion of the public good, should

be devised, he would resist to the utmost of his power any attempt to innovate upon the established principles of the constitution. That he was ready to extend, by degrees, the elective franchise to populous places, has already been shown; and no one who ever heard him discuss the subject of nomination boroughs can doubt that he utterly condemned the selfishness which, by throwing them into a few hands, fixed public attention on what was really an abuse, and justified in some measure the demand for change. But the spirit which prompted him to avow these sentiments was very different from that which both friends and foes attributed to him. "It is curious," he writes in a letter to be quoted hereafter at length, "that I, who have been the greatest reformer on earth, should be held up as an enemy to all reform." It would have been curious, indeed, had the public mind been at that moment in a state to reason and arrive at just conclusions on any subject. But such was not the case. Anger in some, ambition in others, had as completely thrown the judgment of public men off the balance, as the judgment of Don Quixote was unhinged by the course of his studies; and no great while elapsed ere the victims of anger, at all events, found good reason to repent of their folly in dust and ashes.

The debate passed by triumphantly for the ministers, so far that they carried their address without a division. But there was not one among them, or on the benches behind them, who failed to see that a hurricane was gathering; and that the vessel of the state was scarcely in trim to ride it out unharmed.

If the Duke was unpopular before the utterance of this declaration, as it was called, against reform,

his unpopularity increased fourfold as soon as that memorable document appeared in the newspapers. In town and country, at church doors and in market-places, it was read and commented on. Political unions made of it admirable capital, and aspirants for place and power encouraged them to do so. To fill up the measure of his Grace's political misfortunes, there was needed only some incident which might awaken the fears of the timid, and throw them also, for the moment, into the ranks of the opposition; and it befell in a manner admirably calculated to serve the purposes of those who hoped to profit by the event.

Among other excellent measures for which the country is indebted to the Duke's administration, may be specially noticed the enrolment of the metropolitan police, a force unrivalled in Europe for its efficiency and forbearance; which, without encroaching in the slightest degree upon freedom of speech and action, protects the property and secures the persons of the inhabitants of London and of its suburbs, within a circle of several miles. Called into existence at a period of much real and more imaginary distress, the metropolitan police became at once an object of suspicion to others, besides the dangerous classes. Men who ought to have known better, denounced it as one of the Duke's arrangements for depriving England of her liberties; and the people, who needed no incitement from without, were urged, in speeches and through the press, to rise up against the force and put it down. There had been more than one collision, which, however, had not yet taught the mob how incapable undisciplined numbers are to contend successfully against well-trained companies; when it was arranged that the

King, attended by his great officers of state, should dine with the Lord Mayor on the 9th of November. Preparations were accordingly made in the city to receive the royal visit with a splendour worthy both of the guests and of their entertainers. Indeed, matters had gone so far, that handbills were posted in the streets, inviting the citizens to show all possible respect and loyalty to his Majesty as he passed; when, to the consternation and astonishment of the whole realm, there appeared in the morning papers of the 7th a letter from Mr. Peel, announcing that the royal visit would not take place. "His Majesty's servants," it was said, "had been under the painful necessity of advising his Majesty to postpone to another opportunity his visit to the city. Notwithstanding the devoted loyalty and attachment borne to his Majesty by the citizens of London, there was too much cause to apprehend that a tumult might take place." It would be difficult to exaggerate the effect produced in all circles by the publication of this document. The funds fell three per cent. at a blow. Men asked one another whether England was on the eve of a revolution; whether scenes were about to be enacted in London such as had taken place three months previously in Paris. All, moreover, told against the Duke. It had been industriously asserted, while the elections were going on, that his Grace had abetted, indeed advised, the policy of Prince Polignac. The same absurd statement went the round of England now, in defiance of the practical contradiction which had been afforded to it by his prompt recognition of the new order of things in France; and even when he took occasion in the House of Lords to explain the circumstances under

which he had acted, those who failed to ridicule the ostensible cause of his alarm, affected to disbelieve the truth of his statements. And yet, if the Duke made a mistake at all, it was on the side of humanity. The case was this. On the afternoon of the 6th, Mr. Peel received from the Lord Mayor elect a letter, stating that information had been communicated to him of a plot for assassinating the Duke of Wellington on his way to the Mansion House; and that, though every precaution would be taken by the civic authorities to preserve order, it was desirable that a strong military escort should accompany the royal procession. Rumours of a like nature had reached the cabinet from other quarters; only, so far different, that they spoke of an attempt on the life of the King, as well as on the life of the Duke; and in the very unsettled state of the public mind at the moment, it was felt that they could not be wholly disregarded. The question, therefore, presented itself, whether it were worth while to proceed with a ceremonial, which, however gratifying in times of tranquillity, could not then be carried through except at some risk to the peace of the city, and without involving his Majesty in a tumult, and perhaps forcing him to witness the slaughter of some of his subjects. With an ambitious minister and a selfish man considerations of this sort would have told for little. It seemed but reasonable to assume, first, that a proper display of military force could not fail of overawing the disaffected; and next, that any extremity was preferable to such an admission of weakness, as must be implied in the abandonment of the royal visit. The Duke took a different view of the case. He would not, out of regard to his own popularity and position, run

the risk of insult to the King or damage to the citizens of London. Reared in camps and accustomed to battles, he yet shrank from the idea of shedding the blood of his countrymen; and therefore he advised that the visit to the Mansion House should be postponed. Hence the Secretary of State's letter, which was not sent to the newspapers till it had been read and considered in cabinet, and submitted to his Majesty for approval. And hence, too, the storm of abuse with which the ministers in general and the Duke in particular were immediately assailed. It is painful to look back upon the parliamentary discussions of that period, especially in the House of Lords. The Duke was there charged with every political offence of which a servant of the crown could be capable: he had shaken the public securities; he had ruined numberless individuals; he had brought his sovereign into contempt; he had so misgoverned the country as, by his own admission, to render it unsafe for the King to visit his loyal citizens of London. The Duke heard all with perfect calmness, not so much as condescending to reply to it. But he felt at the same time that the tide had become too strong for him, and that his wisest course would be to embrace the first favourable opportunity of retiring from office—a sentiment in which the other members of the cabinet entirely coincided.

The opportunity thus sought for was not slow in presenting itself. A combination of Tories with Whigs and Radicals had already decided on the overthrow of the administration, which it was resolved to effect by placing them in a minority on the bringing up of the civil list. Beyond this, however, the Tories appear never to have looked. They had no plans formed, no

arrangements made for constructing a new administration. In themselves, indeed, they were too weak to grasp at power, and it does not appear that they had so much as opened a negotiation for sharing with their new allies the spoils of office. One master passion ruled them wholly,—they yearned to be revenged on the man whom they had taught themselves to regard as a political traitor; and in order to appease that longing, they gave themselves up to play the game of a party, whose traditions were all antagonistic to their own, and from whom they did not so much as pretend to expect any mercy.

On the 12th of November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his scheme for the civil list, fixing the amount to be settled on the crown at 970,000*l.* Several of the details in his project were objected to; and on the 15th when he asked for his vote Sir Henry Parnell proposed, and Sir Edward Knatchbull seconded a motion, that the accounts should be submitted to a select committee to be examined. Now this course, though unusual, was not entirely unprecedented. The ministers, without any loss of dignity, might have therefore assented to it; but they had made up their minds to stand or fall on this question, rather than enter, with untried strength, on the still more formidable contest with which they were threatened. For Mr. Brougham's notice of motion for leave to bring in a parliamentary reform bill lay on the table; and whatever the nature of his scheme might be, they shrank from opposing it till they should have succeeded in beating their enemies in a fair stand-up fight on some less critical point. The battle was accordingly fought on the civil list question, and it ended un-

favourably for the government; ministers were defeated in a full house, by a majority of twenty-nine.

The blow was struck, and none recoiled from it more immediately than the section of angry Tories, who were mainly instrumental in delivering it. They had achieved their purpose, and stood aghast at it; for no time was lost by the Duke in placing his resignation in the hands of the King; and on the 16th the Lords were informed by his Grace, the Commons by Mr. now Sir Robert Peel, that ministers held office only till their successors should be appointed.

CHAP. XV.

UNGENEROUS CHARGES AGAINST THE DUKE.—HIS LIFE AT WALMER CASTLE.—THE REFORM BILL INTRODUCED INTO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—ITS EFFECT UPON THE PUBLIC MIND.—THE DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.—THE NEW REFORM BILL.—PASSES IN THE COMMONS, AND IS REJECTED IN THE LORDS.—TUMULTS.—THE DUKE'S LIFE THREATENED.

1831.

THUS far we have traced the political career of the Duke of Wellington, with much of the freedom from restraint of one who writes history. We have now arrived at a period when it will be necessary to exercise greater caution. It would be impossible, indeed, without violating public confidence, to speak unreservedly of the acts of courts and cabinets scarcely a quarter of a century old. Private feeling also would be outraged, were the opinions and practices of men, many of them still alive, laid bare and canvassed. We must be satisfied, therefore, to sketch with a rapid pen the mere outline of what remains to be told of his Grace's long and honourable life, leaving to some future biographer, fifty or sixty years hence, the task of filling in its details.

It is an old saying, that the two happiest days in a public man's career, are that in which for the first time he accedes to office, and that on which he retires from it. In the Duke's case it may be doubted, whether the acceptance of office as prime minister brought to him

one moment's personal gratification. It is undoubtedly true, that in getting rid of it he experienced no small measure of personal relief. For however useful to the state his measures would have been, had they received fair play at the hands of the legislature, their immediate effect was to break up the great Tory party; and to render government, on the principle which had been accepted in England throughout the last quarter of a century, no longer possible. For some time past, therefore, his Grace's life had been one of constant annoyance and mortification; and he felt, in withdrawing from office, as men usually do when they escape from situations at once irksome and responsible. Yet his was not a feeling of unmixed satisfaction. In whatever direction he turned his eyes, he saw only dark clouds on the political horizon. The Whigs, long excluded from place, and rendered giddy by their unexpected accession to it, would probably go great lengths — might possibly endanger the constitution itself, rather than be driven again into obscurity. The encouragement which, while in opposition, they had afforded to agitators out of doors was already bearing fruit. And far more formidable in the Duke's eyes than the rioting and incendiarism in the agricultural counties, was the consistency to which the political unions had attained, and the facility with which they extended their influence over all the great towns both of England and Scotland. As to Ireland, agitation had entered there into a new phase, which appeared to him more momentous than any through which it had previously passed. Mr. Stanley, it is true, with great promptitude, brought the law to bear upon Mr. O'Connell, and after a sharp struggle succeeded in

obtaining a verdict against him. But the cabinet, of which Mr. Stanley was not then a member, had reasons of its own for declining to push matters to an extremity; and Mr. O'Connell, who had pleaded guilty to several counts in the indictment, was permitted to go at large without any steps being taken to bring him up for judgment.

All this, in the Duke's opinion, indicated a determination in the new ministers to lean for support entirely on the democratic element, which they contrived with greater skill than generosity to conciliate, by attributing every evil under which the country then suffered to the misgovernment of their predecessors, and especially to the despotic and overbearing temper of the Duke himself. Even the commission which they sent down into Kent, with the hangings and banishments consequent upon it, they pronounced to be his handiwork; because by refusing to hear the people's cry of distress when it was urgent, he had goaded them into insurrection, and devolved upon his successors the painful duty of putting it down. We look back at this day with astonishment on the large measure of success which attended that unjust and shallow policy. From having been an object well-nigh of worship to all classes of society, the Duke was rendered by it the most unpopular man in England. His name was never mentioned in public meetings or in market places except with execration; while blinded ultra-Tories, equally with Whigs and Radicals, spoke of Earl Grey as if he were a demigod.

The brief interval which elapsed between the accession of the new government and the re-assembling of parliament after the recess, was spent by the Duke at

Walmer Castle. He carried thither with him only a small circle of intimate friends, and his conversation was throughout more grave and subdued than on any previous occasion we remember it to have been. His mind seemed, indeed, to be engrossed with the thought of the probable destinies of England and of Europe, of which he certainly did not entertain very cheerful views. "I don't see how these men are to conduct the government," he used to say, "so as to maintain order at home or peace abroad. It's very well for Lord Grey to talk about standing out for reform, retrenchment, and non-intervention. Reform, as he calls it, he may or may not get; retrenchment I'll defy him to carry farther than we have done, unless he sacrifice the great institutions of the country; and as to non-intervention,—with all the sympathies of his party enlisted on the side of democracy, that is in his case impossible. Mark my words; you'll see the Belgian insurrection taken up, and a French army in the Netherlands before many months are over; and then if Austria, Russia, and Prussia move, what is to save Europe from a renewal of scenes which no man who has once taken part in them would ever desire to witness again?"

"But they are acting vigorously in the matter of the rural disturbances, at all events, and Mr. Stanley seems determined to stop the agitator's career in Ireland."

"They are doing in the rural districts the work which we had begun, and handed over to them; but what do you say to their intimacy with the political unions? Do you think they will be able to lay the storm which they have raised in Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow; or prevent it from sweeping away all the safeguards of the constitution? As to O'Connell, depend upon it

that whatever Mr. Stanley may wish to do, Mr. Stanley's masters have other uses to make of the great O, than to gag him."

Early in February parliament met again, and the table of the House of Commons was immediately laden with petitions. They came from all parts of the country, but especially from the great towns, having thousands and tens of thousands of names attached; and all asked for the same thing, viz. a measure to secure a real, not a nominal representation of the people, and to put an end to the influence of the aristocracy in returning members to the House of Commons. In order to secure this end, various suggestions were thrown out; but by far the greater number of the petitions recommended a shortening of the duration of parliaments, an extension and equalisation of the suffrage, and the use of the ballot at elections. It was very evident that one mind and one will had been at work upon the whole of them, while the vagueness of the language in which their prayer was clothed seemed to point out the source in which, directly or indirectly, they had originated. Meanwhile, the committee to which had been entrusted the care of drawing a ministerial bill, accomplished its task. It consisted, as is now well known, of four members, the late Lord Durham, Earl Grey's son-in-law, Lord Duncannon, Sir James Graham, and Lord John Russell; and in due time a great scheme was concocted, considered, and approved in cabinet.

Whatever may be thought of the abstract merits of that scheme, or of the rapidity with which it was taken up, digested, and thrown into form, there can be but one opinion in regard to the wise reserve which all concerned in the concoction of the Reform Bill of

1831 maintained, up to the very day when Lord John Russell proposed it for acceptance to the House of Commons. Innumerable rumours as to its proposed enactments were, indeed, afloat, all of which took their colouring from the preconceived fears or wishes of those with whom they originated. But not a human being out of the circle of the cabinet, and of the ministers taken by the cabinet into their confidence, knew beforehand what was about to be offered, either for their acceptance or their criticism. It was impossible, under such circumstances, for the opposition to condescend upon any fixed line of operations. The leading members of that body, the Duke and Mr. Peel among the rest, consulted indeed, together, and heard and replied to all which their adherents brought under their notice; but the only conclusion at which they could arrive was this, that they must wait and see what the minister might propose; and deal with it as should seem most expedient when the moment for action arrived. This conclusion necessarily implied the concession of a first reading of the bill. For where materials out of which to prepare a plan of resistance are wanting, resistance by a popular assembly is impossible; and there could be no time for collecting and digesting such materials in the present case, till after a bill, of which the secret had been so well kept, should have been once read. The Duke at a subsequent period of the struggle dwelt much upon this fact in his correspondence with the more impatient of his friends, who were eager to shake the confidence of parliament in the ministers, by bringing forward a counter-scheme of their own. His advice was always, to propose nothing; to resist the ministerial plan till an opportunity was afforded, of

throwing over not the plan only, but the ministers also; and then, and not till then, to bring forward a plan of their own. "The Whigs," he observed, "had gained great advantage from secrecy; indeed, secrecy was just as essential in the strife of politics as in war. Had they," the Conservatives, "known beforehand the sort of measure that was in preparation, they would have arranged a plan of resistance; and throwing out the bill on the first reading would have probably defeated it altogether. As it was, they had no course open to them except that which had actually been followed. Do not let them give to the enemy advantages which the enemy wisely kept from them."

In this state matters remained during the recess. Lord Grey's followers in both Houses professed their readiness to take whatever he might offer. Mr. Attwood and the unions desired a large reform, but left the King's ministers free to shape it as they pleased; while the old Tories, still standing apart from the Duke, seemed scarcely in the humour to be dragged, they knew not whither, after the chariot-wheels of the men whom they boasted that they had brought into office. But when, on the 1st of March, 1831, Lord John Russell lifted the veil, and exhibited to the House of Commons and to the nation the great scheme as it had been settled, the universal feeling in doors and out was blank astonishment. The wildest of living Radicals had never ventured to dream of the introduction of so sweeping a measure. The most rabid of the Tories looked aghast, and thought with shame and sorrow of their own poor nibblings at bishops and rotten boroughs. As to the Whigs, to those at least of the party who expected neither promotion in the peerage nor new

coronets, there is ample evidence to show that surprise amounted with them to consternation. It was, however, but the calm which precedes the storm. Whatever noblemen or gentlemen might think, and especially those who either owned boroughs themselves, or sat in the House of Commons, on the nomination of such as owned them, there was no difference of opinion, or seemed to be none, among the unrepresented masses. After a brief pause, as if to gather breath, these raised such a shout as had not been heard in England since it became a nation; of which the effect was to drive out of the minds of common men all thought of offering successful resistance to what appeared to be the will of a unanimous people.

It is well known that the bill, as originally proposed, went a little further in the direction of democracy than that which ultimately became law. The principle of disfranchisement and enfranchisement, on which it mainly rested, underwent, indeed, no change; but a few modifications were introduced into its details, especially in regard to the qualifications of voters, on which, much more than on the connexion of members with particular localities, the bias of a parliamentary government hinges. The bill, as brought in on the 1st of March, proposed to reduce the numbers in the House of Commons from 658 to 596. It fixed the qualification for all boroughs at one uniform standard, namely, the payment of an annual rent of 10*l.* and upwards, or the ownership of property to a like amount. Existing non-resident electors were to retain their franchise for life, but for the future no owner of property in a borough was to have a vote unless he were also a resident. In counties, copyholders to the value of 10*l.*,

householders paying 10*l.* rent, and occupiers of land on lease of twenty-one years, and paying 50*l.* rent, were to become voters. Meanwhile, the electoral privilege was redistributed through the country with a very free hand. The bill disfranchised entirely sixty boroughs in England, of which the separate population fell short of 2,000 souls. It took away one member from each of forty-seven boroughs, containing less than 4,000 inhabitants, and gave two members respectively to Manchester and Salford, to Birmingham, to Ashton, to Greenwich, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, and Sunderland. Twenty other places, all except Brighton manufacturing towns, received one member each; while to twenty-seven of the largest counties, including Yorkshire, two additional members were given. But the most startling provision of all was that which proposed to raise the representation of the metropolis from eight to eighteen members. Such a body of men, constantly at their post, would, it was pretty manifest, exercise immense influence over the decisions of the House; and looking to the class of voters to whom they must owe their seats, would doubtless exercise it against the established institutions of the country. Moreover, as Scotland and Ireland were to be dealt with in like manner, Scotland receiving five, and Ireland three additional members, there was little hope for the aristocracy that help would come to them from either section of the empire. Scotland, indeed, which had heretofore furnished a stout body of supporters to government, would, in all probability, return three-fourths of its representatives pledged to extreme measures; while Ireland would go as Mr. O'Connell might direct, with or against the executive, according as the executive played into his hands, or

assumed an attitude of hostility towards him and his religion.

Such was, in outline, the measure of parliamentary reform which, offered by his Majesty's ministers for the acceptance of the legislature, received the immediate and clamorous support of every man in every corner of the empire, of whose opinions on political subjects, as well as of his manner of expressing them, former sovereigns and parliaments had manifested the greatest jealousy. Its reception within the walls of the House of Commons itself was far from enthusiastic. Few who read, or heard it explained, seemed fully to understand it, and many, because they had been led to believe that neither the Duke nor Mr. Peel cared to precipitate a struggle, voted for its going to a second reading. But here the apparent apathy of the old leaders of the Tories ceased. Sir Robert Peel, indeed, more prone to despair than the Duke, appears to have abandoned at once all hope of successful opposition. He considered that the principle of parliamentary reform was carried as soon as the King, by the hand of his minister, proposed a distinct measure; and hence, though prepared to speak and to vote against the second reading, he made no particular exertions to carry others along with him. The Duke, on the contrary, was a strong advocate for refusing to read the bill a second time. He pointed out that there was the widest possible difference between accepting a general principle, and the principle of a particular measure; that by conceding the first reading, the House had accepted the former; whereas, by refusing to concede the second reading, it would distinctly reject the latter. Peel's caution prevailed, however, over the Duke's boldness.

The second reading came on. It was long and ably debated; but on the opposition side of the House there was great want of discipline and unity of sentiment. The ministers accordingly succeeded in carrying their measure through this stage in its progress also, though only by a majority of one.

Disappointed and annoyed as he was by this issue, the Duke lost neither heart nor temper. He still counselled determined opposition, and in committee opposition began. But it came too late. Ministers, who if defeated either on the first or on the second reading, might have experienced some difficulty in obtaining the consent of the King to a dissolution, were emboldened to demand it on the ground that his Majesty's personal honour was at stake, and they found a plausible excuse for so doing in the unfortunate postponement of a vote on the ordnance estimates, which the highest legal authority in the land pronounced to be a refusal of the supplies.

It is not necessary to dwell upon events which have passed into history. William IV., like his royal consort, was grossly maligned, at a time when stories, as mischievous as they were improbable, got into daily circulation. There was not only no eagerness on his part to go to the people, but he refused at first to break with a parliament, to which, in its liberal provision for the civil list, he felt himself so much indebted. But the adroitness and determination of a section of his cabinet prevailed. General Gascoigne having carried his instructions to the committee, "that the actual number of knights, citizens, and burgesses, returned to parliament for that part of the United Kingdom called England and Wales," should not be diminished, a cry was raised

that the bill had been struck out by a side wind; and the ministers refusing to go on with their measure, a dissolution was determined upon.

Of the scenes which preceded and followed this stroke of policy, it is no special business of ours to speak Mr. Roebuck, in his "Secret History of the Whigs," has told us how it was received in the palace. The manner of its reception by the assembled peers and commoners of Great Britain is well known. Nor were his Majesty and his parliament the only parties excited by it to acts scarcely consistent with the dignity of good government. The mob of London took the matter into its own hands. Peers and commoners were followed through the streets, and cheered, or groaned at, according to the parts which they were understood to have taken in the great debate. And as if this were not sufficient to mark the devotion of the people to the cause of reform, crowds assembled before the dwelling-houses of the more obnoxious among the boroughmongers, and smashed their windows with volleys of stones. Amongst others thus marked as the objects of popular odium was the Duke of Wellington. It happened that the Duchess lay dead in Apsley House at the time. She expired, indeed, just as the firing of the guns in St. James's Park announced the approach of the King to dissolve parliament. But the crowd knew nothing of this, and if it had known, would have probably been very little affected by it. The Duke was one of those who refused, at the bidding of the people, to profess his approval of a step which, in reality, he lamented and condemned; and with other recusants, he paid the penalty.

He suffered this outrage once; but was determined that he should not do so a second time. Iron shutters

were put up, so as to guard every window which was liable to be assailed, either from Piccadilly or Hyde Park; and to the day of his death they remained, a monument, so to speak, of the intemperance of a misguided people, and of the apathy or complicity of the government, which took no steps to restrain it.

A dissolution of parliament was the measure, to the possible adoption of which all reasonable men in opposition to Lord Grey's administration looked forward with apprehension. Some, indeed, had affected to brave the minister by declaring, that if sent to their constituents they would go with the bill in their hands, and ask whether the freemen of England would consent to be robbed of their privileges. But the more thoughtful felt, that amid the excitement which everywhere prevailed, few political bodies would listen to the voice of reason, or consent to be guided by it. For the cry of reform was one which all could understand, or be persuaded without difficulty to believe that they understood, whereas the reasons for refusing the particular reform offered by ministers were too subtle to be used successfully on any hustings. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that even thus early there should have been those who began to speak about the necessity of conceding something, in order to obtain similar concessions from the enemy. Lord Wharncliffe, a nobleman of considerable talent and large parliamentary experience, appears to have been one of the first to turn his thoughts in that direction. But his application to the Duke to co-operate with him, so far as to meet a number of peers and concert with them a line of action in the next parliament, met with no favourable reception. Lord Wharncliffe wrote on the

22nd of April, and on the 23rd received a reply; of which the tone seems to us to be as wise as it is constitutional. "The Duke declined to meet the other peers. They had been dissolved by the King as a house of parliament, and if they met as invited, they would meet as peers without his Majesty's authority, and contrary to his inclinations, to discuss his last act in relation to themselves. This would not look or sound well, and the Duke thought it would do them more harm in the eyes of the public, than good could be done by the meeting, in exposing the conduct of the King's servants, its breach of the privileges of the House of Lords and of the law, and its mischievous consequences to the public interests. In his opinion the House of Lords was the only place in which as peers they ought to discuss such subjects. They were there conservators of the constitution, and they could there act with a freedom which is the attribute of members of parliament. Out of doors they were no more than others of his Majesty's subjects, excepting that they enjoyed the privilege of being exempt from arrest, and had titles of honour and rank, and precedence in society. But these very privileges, with the peculiar duties of the House of Lords, ought to make them out of doors, the examples of loyalty to the King, and of submission to the laws and to authority. And they should take care to avoid even the appearance of acting upon a contrary principle. If this ought to be their course in ordinary circumstances, it ought to be so particularly in the critical times which were approaching."

Meanwhile those consequences of the ministerial act to which men of all shades of opinion looked forward, were not slow in developing themselves. New writs

were issued, and a general election began, amid violence and outrage to persons and property such as had not occurred in England since the days of the first Charles. In the larger towns, no one who presumed to express an opinion unfavourable to the government measure, either generally or in detail, could obtain a hearing. For the newspapers combined to write up "the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," and to denounce as traitors to their country all who refused to join in that unmeaning cry. It would serve no good purpose were we to describe the process of intimidation which went forward in all quarters. Suffice it to state, that when the returns came in, they exhibited so powerful a majority of reformers, that of the ministers themselves, there were some who looked not without dismay at the monster which they had helped to call into existence.

Indeed it seemed as if a judicial blindness had overtaken the whole nation, for counties as well as boroughs gave way to the madness of the hour; and gentlemen well known in their own neighbourhoods, who had long sat in parliament for constituencies which professed entire approval of their conduct, were set aside for new members because they refused to pledge themselves to the bill.

Into a House of Commons so constituted, a second edition of the Reform Bill was introduced, which differed from the first in a few unimportant particulars only, while its principle remained essentially the same. Every enactment, indeed, which had been regarded by the Conservative party as most noxious was retained. What the points were to which they mainly objected

will appear in the course of this narrative; but, in the meanwhile, we content ourselves with stating that the bill forced its onward way, and that, after a stout resistance, which continued from the 24th of June to the 21st of September, it was read a third time and passed in the House of Commons. Next day, Lord Grey moved its first reading in the House of Lords, which was conceded without opposition. But on the 3rd of October, when the second reading was proposed, the struggle began. Never, perhaps, has eloquence more brilliant been displayed in an assembly of free men, than that which, from either side of the woolsack, electrified the House of Lords on that memorable occasion. The bill was advocated, after the prime minister, by Lords Lansdowne, Durham, Plunkett, Melbourne, and, above all, by Lord Brougham. It was denounced and exposed in all its details by Lords Harrowby, Wharncliffe, Haddington, Lyndhurst, Carnarvon, and Eldon. The Duke took a line of his own, and the effect produced by his speech, both in parliament and throughout the country, was prodigious. After defending himself from the charge, that he had been mainly instrumental in causing the reform cry to be raised, and fixing, with great skill, upon ministers the responsibility of such cry, his Grace went on to show that they had exhibited in everything the most extraordinary contempt for constitutional usage, even to the very language which they put into the sovereign's mouth when he came down in person to dissolve parliament. "The principle," his Grace observed, "of the noble lord's bill had, in the late parliament, been agreed to. Why did not the noble lords persevere in carrying through their bill, making such alte-

rations as might render it palatable to the House of Commons, and consistent with the established practice of the constitution? This did not suit their purpose; they dissolved the parliament, and advised their sovereign to appeal to his people. I attribute all our misfortunes to that event. The noble lords advised their sovereign upon that occasion to come to parliament, and to make this speech:—

"'I have come to meet you for the purpose of proroguing this parliament, with a view to its immediate dissolution. I have been induced to resort to this measure for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my people in the way in which it may be most constitutionally and authentically expressed, on the expediency of making such changes in the representation as circumstances may seem to require; and which, founded upon the acknowledged principles of the constitution, may tend at once to uphold the just rights and prerogatives of the crown, and to give security to the liberties of my people.'

"The dissolution then made, and the speech delivered by his Majesty, were both upon a principle entirely different from that of the precedents according to which the measure was adopted. In 1784, the king, George III., differed from his ministers upon a great question. They retired from his service, and his Majesty appointed other ministers. Those ministers did not enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons, and the king dissolved his parliament, and put an end to the session, in the words which I am about to read to your lordships:—

"On a full consideration of the present situation of affairs, and of the extraordinary circumstances which have produced it, I am induced to put an end to this session of parliament.

"I feel it a duty which I owe to the constitution, and to the country, in such a situation to recur as speedily as possible to the sense of my people, by calling a new parliament.

"I trust that the measure will tend to obviate the mischiefs arising from the unhappy divisions and distractions which have lately subsisted; and that the various important objects which will require consideration may be afterwards proceeded upon with less interruption, and with happier effect.

"I can have no other object but to preserve the true principles of our free and happy constitution; and to employ the powers intrusted to me by law, for the only end for which they were given — the good of my people."

"I will not give your lordships the trouble," continued his Grace, "of listening to the perusal of the case of 1807, which stands precisely upon the same principle as that of 1784. In both the king differed with his ministers and with the parliament upon measures upon which his Majesty had decided; and he appealed to the sense of his people, and called upon them to elect a parliament which should give their confidence to the ministers of his choice in carrying on the measures which he approved. The transaction was brought to a close before the appeal was made to the people. The people were not called upon to deliberate upon any

measures ; but the appeal to them was rather, it may be said, in favour of the men whom his Majesty had named as his ministers. In the case of 1831, however, the noble lords have advised their sovereign to refer, for discussion, to the people, not whether the King was to be supported in naming his ministers ; not whether parliament is to be reformed, because upon the principle of reform there was a majority in the late House of Commons ; but upon a particular plan of reform, which has accordingly been discussed throughout the country."

The Duke, in thus expressing himself, enunciated a great constitutional truth, which seems to have been quite forgotten at the time, and has not been on all occasions remembered since. The people neither are nor can ever be rendered a deliberative body. They have played the part which the constitution assigns to them, as soon as they have elected representatives to deliberate for them. To appeal to the people from the decisions of such representatives, especially in matters of detail, is to strike at the root of the whole system of parliamentary government. In the present instance proof was speedily afforded, that you cannot govern for the people by the people. After a few days' debate, conducted with consummate ability, the lords rejected the bill by a majority of 41, and the entire nation, from Land's End to John o' Groats' House, fell into a state of anarchy. Mobs sacked Bristol, burned Nottingham Castle, and committed the grossest outrages in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Noble lords were attacked in the streets of London, and hunted through their own parks and gardens in the country. Again the windows of every obnoxious peer and commoner were broken, and attempts were made

to fire and plunder more than one quarter of the metropolis. From the fury of this conflict the Duke did not wholly escape. Before his iron shutters could be closed, a volley of stones came pouring into the gallery at Apsley House, by which several picture frames were broken, and one painting which he valued seriously damaged. How he escaped with life, passing daily as he did through crowds of persons inflamed to the highest pitch of fury against him, it is not easy to say. For the very nature of the English people seemed to be changed by the addresses of those who, through the press, or from public platforms, spoke openly of "De Witing" one whose past services, whatever they might have been, were more than cancelled by his obstinate resistance to the King's wish, and to the just rights and demands of the people.

Nor was it in London only that this bad spirit prevailed. From more than one quarter, his Grace received intimation that it would be unsafe to show himself in certain towns which were named. Even his return to Walmer Castle was not to be effected without danger. Deal, poor as it was, had caught the infection; and a plot was arranged in one of the low public houses there, to attack his carriage when it should approach the turnpike, which stands between Sandwich and that town. The Duke was made aware of the threatened danger, and, like a skilful general, he hastened his departure from London by several hours, thus throwing out the assassins, if such there really were, by reaching the post of danger long before he was expected. But a few gentlemen in that part of the country did not consider it safe to trust entirely to that measure. They

mounted their horses, each armed with pistols, and riding in groups, as if on their own business, kept some ahead, and others in rear of his Grace's carriage, till it swept up to the drawbridge at Walmer Castle. The Duke travelled on that occasion with a brace of double-barreled pistols in the pocket of his britzska, and the servant who sat on the box was armed also.

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